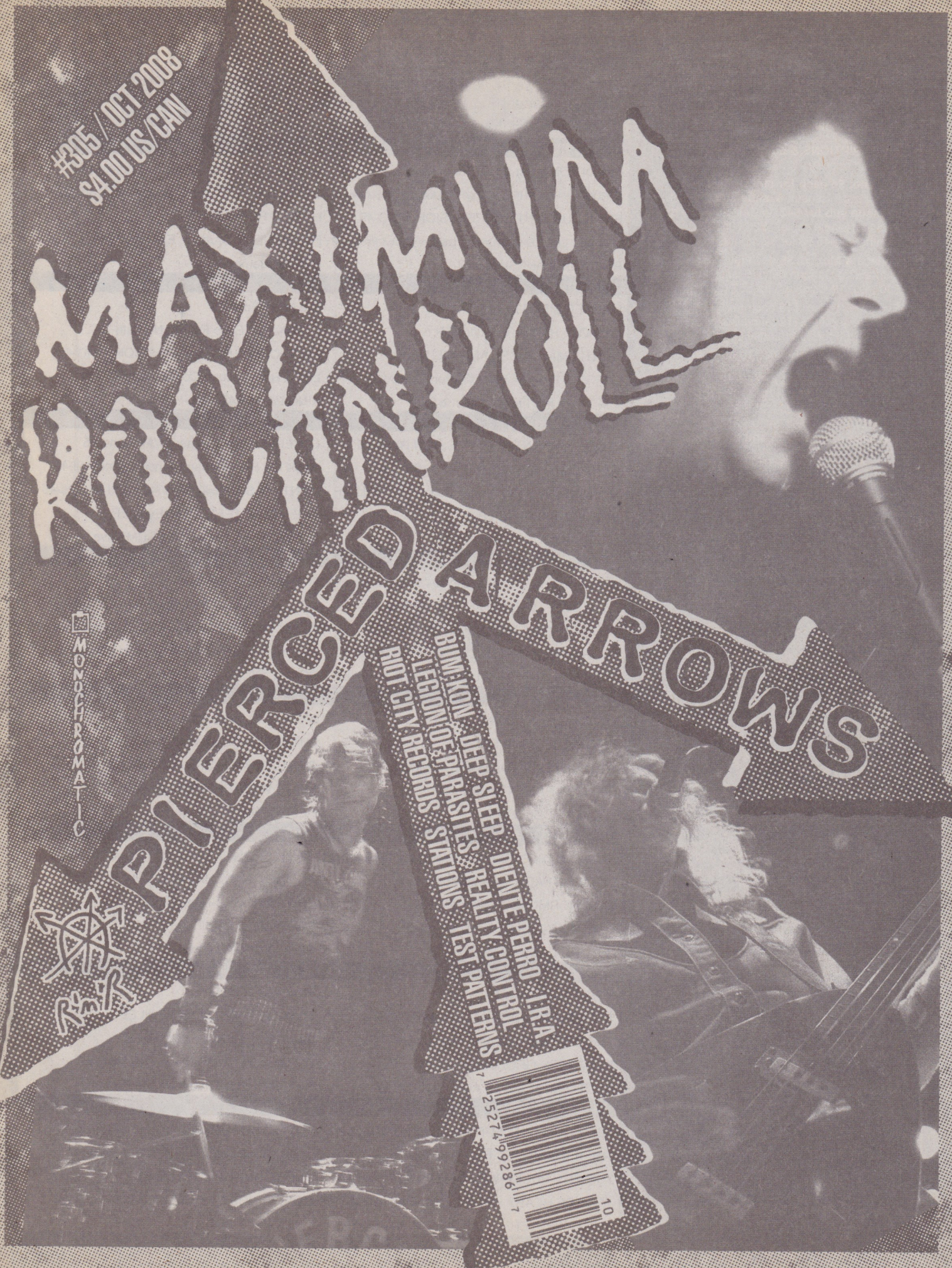
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For what it's worth, here's some of the MRR reviewers' current Top 10 (or so) things we've reviewed this month.

TOP 10

JUSTIN BRIGGS

- PERDITION-West Coast Tour-cassette
- STRUGGLE FOR PRIDE-Change the Mood/Movie Scenes-45
- EDDY CURRENT SUPPRESSION RING-45
- MENTALLY CHALLENGED-Doctors, Lawyers, Cops & Priests-EP
- REPROBRATES-Stress-EP
- VIIMEINEN KOLONNA-Tuhat Aurinkoa-EP
- GASMASK TERRÖR-Architects of Death-EP
- LOGIC PROBLEM-EP
- FIX MY HEAD-Garbage Existence-EP
- MORNE-demo

TIM BROOKS

- MARKED MEN-LP
- DE HØJE HÆLE-Rovguitar-EP
- GENTLEMAN JESSE AND HIS MEN-LP
- OFF WITH THEIR HEADS-From the Bottom-LP
- V/A-Tunes For Fucker Volume 2-LP
- BALLAST-Fuse-LP
- BLACK DOVE-No Future, No Fate-LP
- EDDY CURRENT SUPPRESSION RING-45
- LIFE TRAP-Solitary Confinement-EP
- KING GENERATOR-LP

MITCH CARDWELL

- EDDY CURRENT SUPPRESSION RING-45
- GENTLEMAN JESSE AND HIS MEN-LP
- THE MAHONIES-Hey We Got Coney! It's Great!...-EP
- IMAGINARY ICONS-LP
- LOVER!-Man in the Woods-EP
- LOVER!-No More Reasons/All Alone-45
- JACK OF HEART-San Francisco/Ponytail-45
- MENTHOLS-Miracle Slips/Rats and Insects-45
- THE METAL TEETH-Wild Eyes-EP
- BUZZER-live / WAX MUESCUMS-live

PAUL CURRAN & ARIEL AWESOME

- AMERICAN CHEESEBURGER/CANADIAN RIFLE-split EP
- WILD BILLY CHILDISH & THE MBE-EP
- CLOSET FAIRIES-Cassandra/Tight Lips-45
- LA CRISI-II-Tutti A Pezzi-CD / DE HØJE HÆLE-EP
- FIX MY HEAD-EP / FUTURE PHONES-Tourist-EP
- IMAGINARY ICONS-LP
- LOVER!-Man in the Woods-EP / LOVER!-45
- PROJECT HOPELESS-Välkommen till Vår Sopfyllda Fabric-CD
- THE YOUNGER LOVERS-Newest Romantic...-CD
- SOCIAL GRACES/GLUE-live

LAYLA GIBBON

- MENTALLY CHALLENGED-EP
- STRUGGLE FOR PRIDE-45
- WILD BILLY CHILDISH & THE MBE-EP
- DE HØJE HÆLE-Rovguitar-EP
- LOGIC PROBLEM-EP
- ANTIDOTE-Thou Shalt Not Kill-LP
- FUTURE DADS-24 Winship-LP
- GENTLEMAN JESSE AND HIS MEN-LP
- SMITH WESTERNS-Irukandji-EP
- REPROBRATES-Stress-EP

BOB GOLDIE *NEW TOP TEN!!!*

- AMERICAN CHEESEBURGER/CANADIAN RIFLE-split EP
- CITIZENS PATROL-Dead Children-EP
- SICK MORMONS-Taekwando-EP
- LIFE TRAP-Solitary Confinement-EP
- FUTURE DADS-24 Winship-LP
- GENTLEMAN JESSE AND HIS MEN-LP
- ANTIDOTE-Thou Shalt Not Kill-LP
- PRIVATE DICKS-Homelife-LP
- OBSTRUCTION-EP
- REPROBRATES-Stress-EP

KENNY KAOS

- JERK ALERT-Dirty Slurs-LP
- THE CRETEENS/STRAIGHT ARROWS-split EP
- THE EEGOS-If You Ain't Shaking-EPTHE
- BROTHERS GROSS-Introducing...-EP
- GENTLEMAN JESSE AND HIS MEN-LP
- MARKED MEN-LP
- LIVE FAST DIE/LOVER!-split EP
- PALAVA SURFERS -Zombie-EP
- WILD BILLY CHILDISH & THE MBE-EP
- SICK MORMONS-Taekwando-EP

CAROLYN KEDDY

- EDDY CURRENT SUPPRESSION RING-45
- THE BARBERRIES-Raw Deal-EP
- THE PITY FUCKS-Why Right Now-EP
- JACK OF HEART-San Francisco/Ponytail-45
- SMITH WESTERNS-EP / THE MAHONIES-EP
- LOVER!-EP / LOVER!-45 / MENTHOLS-45
- WILD BILLY CHILDISH & THE MBE-EP
- THE YOUNGER LOVERS-CD
- COATHANGERS & FEELIES-live
- THE LAST POGO-DVD

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TOP 10

Please send two copies of vinyl, CD-only , or demo releases to the address on the previous page.

RAY LUJAN

- THE DOPAMINES-CD
- FORMER CELL MATES-Who's Dead and What's to Pay-CD
- OFF WITH THEIR HEADS-From the Bottom-LP
- SLEEPWALL-Come in From the Cold-EP
- LAGWAGON-I Think My Older Brother...-CD
- THE WEDNESDAY NIGHT HEROES-LP
- GENTLEMAN JESSE AND HIS MEN-LP
- THAT'S MY DAUGHTER-It Takes Tuna Tango-CD
- NO HARM DONE-Escape-CD
- SICK MORMONS-EP / CLOSET FAIRIES-45

ALLAN MCNAUGHTON

- GENTLEMAN JESSE AND HIS MEN-LP
- EDDY CURRENT SUPPRESSION RING-45
- MARKED MEN-LP / IMAGINARY ICONS-LP
- BEASTIE BOYS-Pollywog Stew EP-LP
- DE HØJE HÆLE-Rovguitar-EP
- LOGIC PROBLEM-EP
- CAMP X-RAY-S.A.D.S.U.-EP
- WILD BILLY CHILDISH & THE MBE-EP
- PRIVATE DICKS-Homelife-LP
- AGENT ORANGE-live

NICK MANGEL

- ANGER BURNING-Warcharge-EP
- BLACK DOVE-No Future, No Fate-LP
- CASTET-Punk Side of the Moon/Kings of Punk-LP
- DEATHCAGE-From Despair To Where-EP
- ETACARINAE-In These Dark Times-CD
- GASMASK TERRÖR-Architects of Death-EP
- INFÄME-LP
- WARVICTIMS-Lognen om Fredsavtalet-CD
- NITAD-Ibland Kan Man Inte Hindera Sig Sjalv-CD
- MASSGRAV-This War Will Be Won By Meat Eaters-CD

BRUCE ROEHRS

- ANGER BURNING-Warcharge-EP
- REPROBRATES-Stress-EP
- LIFE TRAP-Solitary Confinement-EP
- SICK MORMONS-Taekwando-EP
- VIIMEINEN KOLONNA-Tuhat Aurinkoa-EP
- LOGIC PROBLEM-EP
- HARRINGTON SAINTS/SLICK 46-split EP
- REPULSION/AT THE GATES-live
- OXBLOOD/TRIED AND TRUE-live
- SCARECROW/CRETACEOUS/FLOATING GOAT-live

FRED SCHRUNK *NEW TOP TEN!!!*

- MARKED MEN-LP
- ANGRY SAMOANS-Inside My Brain-LP
- CLOSET FAIRIES-Cassandra/Tight Lips-45
- DELAY-Grey Like the Whale/The Oak & the Rose-45
- AMERICAN CHEESEBURGER / CANADIAN RIFLE – split EP
- DE HØJE HÆLE-Rovguitar-EP
- FUTURE PHONES-EP
- REPROBRATES-Stress-EP
- GENTLEMAN JESSE AND HIS MEN-LP
- SOMETHING'S WRONG-live

CISSIE SCURLOCK

- EDDY CURRENT SUPPRESSION RING-45
- MENTALLY CHALLENGED-EP
- LOGIC PROBLEM-EP
- STRUGGLE FOR PRIDE-Change the Mood/Movie Scenes-45
- FIX MY HEAD-Garbage Existence-EP
- AMERICAN CHEESEBURGER / CANADIAN RIFLE – split EP
- ANGER BURNING-EP / REPROBRATES-EP
- GASMASK TERRÖR-Architects of Death-EP
- VIIMEINEN KOLONNA-Tuhat Aurinkoa-EP
- CANADIAN RIFLE/SOLID DECLINE-live

MARTIN SORRONDEGUY

- REPROBRATES-Stress-EP
- LIFE TRAP-Solitary Confinement-EP
- DE HØJE HÆLE-EP / ANGER BURNING-EP
- CITIZENS PATROL-Dead Children-EP
- V/A-Tunes For Fucker Volume 2-LP
- AMERICAN CHEESEBURGER / CANADIAN RIFLE – split EP
- VIIMEINEN KOLONNA-Tuhat Aurinkoa-EP
- 7 SECONDS-Hardcore Rules 1980-1982-LP
- KRIEGSHOG/ACUTE/AI/ISTERISMO-live in Japan + many more

ZINE TOP TEN

- *Butthole Magazine* #1
- *CLOG* #1
- *Fag School* #3
- *Loserdom* #18
- *Ration* #5
- *Terms of Psychic Warfare* #1
- *Absolutely Zippo* #42
- *The Inner Swine* vol. 14 #2
- *Razorcake* #45
- *Modern Hate Vibe* #1 & #2

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A WHOLE CRAPLOAD OF MRR BACK ISSUES...

#156 pt 1/May '96. Public Toys, Crunch, Peter & The Test Tube Babies, Nails Of Hawaiian, Splash 4, Yawp!, Lifetime, Sickoids.

#156 pt 2/May '96. Australian Special: Beanflipper, Melancholy, Blitz Babiez, Crank, SubRosa, Mindsnare, TMT, H-Block, B-Sides, Fallout, Frenzal Rhomb, Lawnsmell, One Inch Punch, Chickenshit, No Deal.

#161/Oct '96. Jet Bumpers, Steel Miners, Divisia, Lopo Drido, Red #9, Nothing Cool, Sink, Sires, Newtown Grunts.

#175/Dec '97. One Man Army, Those Unknown, Boiling Man, Piao Chong, Exploding Crustaceans, Last Year's Youth, Heartdrops, Dirty Burds, Dimestore Haloes.

#179/April '98. Boy Sets Fire, Tres Kids, Idyls, Spat & The Guttersnipes, The Posers, Explosive Kate, Douche Flag.

#180/May '98. Reinforce, Discontent, TV Killers, Slack Action, Eyeliners, Mademoiselle, MK Ultraviolence, Haulin' Ass, 97a, Infiltrators, Jack Saints, Stray Bullets.

#181/June '98. Grapefruit, Druggies, DDI, Bonecrusher, Normals, All Bets Off, Stiletto Boys, Summerjack, Cell Block 5.

#184/Sept '98. Absentees, Devoid of Faith, UXA, Umlaut, Four Letter Word, Streetwalkin' Cheetahs, Ricanstruction, Libertine, Indecision, Snarkout Boys.

#186/Nov '98. Registrators, August Spies, Marilyn's Vitamins, Chinese Love Beads.

#187/Dec '98. Real Kids, Sawn Off, Cretins, Spider Cunts, Heroines, 3rd Party, No Class.

#188/Jan '99. Stitches, Neighbors, Mansfields, Real Swinger, Marauders, Mark Bruback, Mars Moles, DOA.

#189/Feb '99. Monster X, Peter & the Test Tube Babies, Steam Pig, Maurauders, Yakuza, Dead Beat, Halfways, Hot Rod Honeys, DeRita Sisters.

#190/Mar '99. John Holstrom, Powerhouse, Brezhnev, Slappy, Black Pumpkin, Smartbomb ca, Wanda Chrome, Long Gones, Smogtown, Halfways, Tilt.

#191/April '99. Murder Suicide Pact, Kil Kare, Dudman, Super Hi-Fives, Better Than Elvis DJs, Pet Peeves, Loose Ends, Slingshot Episode.

#192/May '99. Los Crudos, Burning Kitchen, Henry Fiat's Open Sore, Polythene, Kangaroo Recs.

#193/June '99. Munster Recs, DS-13, Safety Pins, Pussycats, Piolines, False Alarm, Darlington, Bad Stain, Bodies, Houseboy, Mullets.

#194/July '99. Deathreat, Last Match, God Hates Computers, Fokkewolf, Flesh Eating Creeps, Aside, Hoppin' Mad, Kid Dynamite, Thee Outcasts.

#195/Aug '99. Moral Crux, RC5, Have Nots, Ill Tempered, Dysentery, Greg Higgins, Revlons, Larry & the Gonowheres.

#196/Sept '99. Hopscotch, Catharsis, Orchid, The Pricks, Grissle, Product X, Reaching Forward, Emerge, Third Degree, "Epicenter Zone '90-'99".

#197/Oct '99. Reducers SF, Lower Class Brats, Reactor 7, TheGodsHateKansas, Futuro Incierto, Showcase Showdown, Waifle, Flat Earth Recs.

#199/Dec '99. Locust, Ratos de Porao, USV, Razlog Za, G-3, Swarm, WHN?, Mt. St. Helens, Black Cat Music, Enemy Soil.

#200/Jan '00. American Steel, Curse, Gee Vaucher, Hers Never Existed, Aaron Cometbus, Active distro, Toxic Narcotic, MRR catalogue #100-200.

#204/May '00. Cocksparrer, Talk Is Poison, Red Scare, Put Downs, Out Cold, Geraldine, Michael Knight, CBGaV, Pillage People.

#206/July '00. Drunk, ESL, Ambition Mission, Lord High Fixers, Cripple Bastards, Dig Dug, Federation X, Amulet, Valentine Killers.

#207/Aug '00. Harum Scarum, Raw Power, Unseen, Pekinska Patka, Hudson Falcons, Dementia 13, Confine, Allergic to Whores.

#208/Sept '00. Le Shok, the Commies, the Chemo Kids, Day of Mourning, Affront, Diaspora, Whippersnapper, Hopeless/Sub City, Prank, Countdown to Oblivion

#209/Oct '00. Loose Lips, Godstomper, Peace of Mind, FYP, I Farm, Annalise, Cattle Decapitation, Riot/Clone.

#210/Nov '00. J Church, Profane Existence, Pezz, Pre-Teens, Templars, This Machine Kills, Subtonix, OB.

#214/Mar '01. Crispus Attucks, Fetish, Lifes Halt, Mr. Roboto, Dream Dates, Satan McNugget, Havoc, Briefs.

#215/April '01. No Means No, Vitamin X, Injections, Y, Dils, Last In Line, Don Austin, Deranged Records

#218/July '01. Guyana Punchline, Les Sexareenos, The Devil Is Electric, Red Monkey, White Collar Crime, Forca Macabra, The Ataris, Suicide, The Mob

#221/Oct '01. The G8 Summit, Reflections, Soophie Nun Squad, Totalitär, True North, Wontons, Sin Dios, Bottles & Skulls, Scarred For Life, Flowers in the Dustbin, Remains of the Day, Ritchie Whites, B'67.

#222/Nov '01. Dios Hastio, Tragedy, Four Letter Word, *Salad Days* author Charles Romalotti, Very Metal, Maurice's Little Bastards, the Rotters, MDC Brazilian tour diary, the Cravats, JR Ewing, Dutch scene, extended news section, "Globalization Rhetoric & Reality,"

#223/Dec '01. "US Policy in the Middle East," "Revisiting 1948," Manifesto Jukebox, Good Riddance, Pokers, Viimenen Kolonna, Bluebloods, Vitamin X tour diary, Flakes, Pg. 99, the Mob, 7 Days of Samsara.

#224/Jan '02. "Legislation Since Sept. 11, Rendencion 9.11, Metro Youth, Severed Head of State, Piranhas, Paraf, Backstabbers, Inc, An Albatross, Citizen Fish Tour, SPAM Records, the Virus, Action Time.

#225/Feb '02. Lengua Armada, Breaker Breaker, 3 Yrs. Down, Scrotum Grinder, Turun Tauti, Flux Of Pink Indians, Holding On, Pauki, 86'd, See You In Hell, Red Light Sting, Nazis From Mars, Scare Tactic.

#227/Apr '02. Bellrays, Rhinos, Wasted, Kristofer Pasanen, Business, Assert, DS 13 tour report, Life Set Struggle, Iowaska, Zounds.

#229/June '02. Countdown To Putsch, The Awakening, Dave Hill Distribution, Holier Than Thou, Kill Devil Hills, Sound Of Failure, E.T.A., Nubs, Les Baton Rouge, New Disorder Records, Career Suicide, Swellbellys, The Sinyx.

#230/July '02. Bitchin', Redencion 911, Phantom Limbs, Secretions, Holy Molar, Sharp Knife, Mighty John Waynes, A Global Threat, Groovie Ghoulies, Reproach, Annie Anxiety.

#231/Aug '02. Epoxies, Puppy Vs. Dyslexia, Koro, Blocko, Amdi Petersen's Armé, Piss & Vinegar Zine, Schizophrenic Records, Toys That Kill, Give Us Barabbas, Dirt.

#232/Sept '02. "No Future" article, Lost, Fartz, Sell Outs, Razors Edge, Stakeout, Dillinger Four, All or Nothing HC, Fleshies, Bridge Nine Records, Akashic Books, Liberty.

#233/Oct '02. "All Ages" article, Scholastic Deth, Runnamucks, Sinners & Saints, Panic, Gasolheads, Jewws, Futures, Michael Landon's Commandos, Storm the Tower, Against Me!, Balance of Terror, Class Assassins, Spazm 151.

#234/Nov '02. Snobs, What Happens Next? Brazilian tour, The Oath, Radio 4, Feederz, Charm City Suicides, Selfish, Riot 99, End On End, Peawees, Born/Dead.

#235/Dec '02. Anti-war Special Issue. Articles: "Reading for Democracy," "War on Iraq?" "Unfinished American Revolution," Resource Guide, "US Involvement in Iraq,""Axis of Empire." Long Island DIY Scene, What Happens Next? Brazilian tour part 2, Smalltown, Kylesa, Crash & Burn.

#236/Jan '03. Mr. California & State Police, Iron Lung, Riff Randells, Chainsaw, *Artcore*, Latterman, Travis Cut, Phenomenauts, Pretty Little Flower, X-Cretas.

#238/Mar '03. World Burns To Death, Chronics, Vilently Ill, Dystopia, Pager, Exotic Fever, Brezhnev, R.A.M.B.O., Blown To Bits, Put To Shame, Deconditioned, This Bike Is A Pipe Bomb, Monsters.

#239/Apr '03. Romanian D-beat, Meconium Records, Amazombies, Abandoned Hearts Club, Mike V. & the Rats, Nicki Sicki, Bigamists, Bolivia article, Negatives, Kuolema, Defiance.

#240/May '03. I Quit, Apers, Headless Horsemen, Lesser of Two, Barse, Nightmare, Music Zine Roundtable, Exploding Hearts, Flesh Packs, Blacklist Brigade.

#241/June '03. Tyrades, Lumbergh, The Stand By Me, New Mexican Disaster Squad, Cut the Shit, Libertinagem, 17th Class, the Ends, He Who Corrupts, Deathbag, Cria Cuervos.

#242/July '03. Pensacola & San Francisco punk protest reports, John Wilkes Booze, Anfo, Bob Suren, Migra Violenta, Jackson 8, *Snakepit* zine , Krigshot, the Rites, Deadfall.

#243/Aug '03. "Media Alliance and the FCC," Striking Distance, Malcontents, Invisible City, Books Lie, Charm City Art Space, Hopeless Dregs of Humanity, I Shot Cyrus, Sunday Morning Einsteins, What the Kids Want, Onion Flavored Rings.

#244/Sept '03. None More Black, Deadline, Rai Ko Ris, Boxed In, Exploding Hearts, Raving Mojos, Blackout Terror, Morticia's Lovers, Thee Fine Lines, *Trust* zine.

#245/Oct '03. No Time Left, Riistetyt, Intense Youth, The Gimmies, Ass End Offend, Artimus Pyle, La Fraction, Kung Fu Rick, The Horror.

#246/Nov '03. Punk & Resistance in Israel, Letters from Palestine, No Choice, FM Knives, Bury the Living, Marked Men, The Dirty Burds, Provoked.

#247/Dec '03. DSB, The Boils, Popular Shapes, Phoenix Foundation, Bathtub Shitter, Meet the Virus, Cropknox, "Punk Babies on Tour" Article.

#248/Jan '04. Discharge, Superhelicopter, Jed Whitey, Black Friday '29, Find Him And Kill Him, The Lids, Impratical Cockpit, Face Up To It, History Of Maximum Rocknroll Radio.

#249/Feb '04. From Ashes Rise, Hagar the Womb, This Is My Fist, Skip Jensen, Gride, Katy Otto/Mike Taylor Dialogue, John Yates, Pointing Finger.

#250/Mar '04. Best Records of 2003, Miami FTAA protests, Clorox Girls, FIYA, "La Villita: Chicago Pilsen Scene," Terminus Victor, Restarts, Damage Done, Knights of New Crusade.

#251/April '04. The Fuse!, Väkivaltaa, Modern Machines, Microcosm, Migra Violenta Euro tour diary, Allegiance, Neurotic Swingers, Xavier Lepaige Photos, Le Scrawl,Vrah.

#252/May '04. Fucked Up, Firestarter, Inepsy, Laukaus, Great Clearing Off, Radio Reelers, Extreme Noise Records, 46 Short, The State, John The Baker, Free Verse, Chrystaei Branchaw photos.

#253/June '04. Sweet J.A.P., Gorilla Angreb, Vöetsek, Minority Blues Band, Scruvy Dogs, Molotov Cocktail, Kidnappers, Schifosi, King Ly Chee, YDI.

#254/July '04. No Hope For The Kids, Dropdead, Diskords, Breakfast, Asschapel, I Excuse, Strung Up, To Hell & Back, Four Eyes, Lamant, Gammits MW, scene reports from Portland, Boston and Germany.

#255/Aug '04. "Punk's Not Dead, Reagan Is" Special Issue. Leatherface, Get It Away, The Hatepinks, Keen Monkey Work, New York City, South Dakota, Czech Republic, Philippines, Russia.

#256/Sep '04. The Observers, Witchhunt, Annihilation Time, Zann, Eskapo, FxPxO, Haymarket Riot, Fourth Rotor, Les Georges Lenigrad, Texas scene, Newfoundland, Indiana, England.

#257/Oct '04 The Election Issue, Jesse Townley, Matt Gonzalez, Rattus, Fighting Dogs, Hero Dishonest, Kickz, The Boss Martians, Reactionary Three, Slovakia, Australia, South Wales, South East Asia.

#258/Nov '04. Career Suicide, Cathy Wilkerson of the Weather Underground, No Fucker, The Repos, Dominatrix, Ashtray, Deadstop, Midnight Creeps, Michale Graves, The Diffs, The Shemps, Abi Yo Yo's.

#259/Dec '04. Bad Business, Penelope Houston, Rambo, AI, Ass, I Attack, The Krunchies, A-Lines, Insurgence Records, The Hates, Accidents, Massgrav, The Critics, Merciless Game, SF Hotel Workers Strike, photos from Japan, SoCal & the Bay Area.

#260/Jan '05. Technocracy, The Total End, Only Crime, True North, Partisans, For The Worst, Dick Spikie, Straight to Hell, Black Cross, Action, Ergs, Rusty Nails, Queer Activism in London, Greg Shaw tribute, John Peel tribute, Andrew "Stig" Sewell tribute, Beijing punk photos.

#261/Feb '05. Year End Top Tens, Riistetyt, Lost Cherrees, Complete Control, Cheap Sex, Gasoline Please, Beerzone, Greyskull, MOTO, Water Into Beer Fanzine, Swe-Punk scumpit, Japan punk photos, Bay Area punk photos, Texas, Russia, and Malaysia scene reports.

#262/March '05. Kärnvapen Attack, Neo Boys, Catholic Boys, Dead Moon, Wreckage, Frantix, Armitage Shanks, Wendy Kroys, To What End?, Cell Block 5, Bent Outta Shape, Ah-Nah Tron, Slovakia, Indonesia, and Illinois scenes.

#263/April '05. All Crusties Spending Loud Night 2004, Bombenalarm, Battleship, APA, The Black Lips, Words That Burn, Flamingo 50, The Low Budgets, Mellakka, I Object, Antisect, Bay Area scene report, South Coast UK scene report.

#264/May '05. Crime, Love Songs, Bruce Banner, Intent, The Holy Mountain, Have Heart, The Bill Bondsmen, The Real Losers, archive photos, Bay Area scene photos, Taiwan and Rochester scene reports.

#265/June '05. Endless Nightmare, Hard Skin, Kolokol, Amebix, Transistor Transistor, The Safes, The Detonators, Finland scene report, France scene report, SoCal scene report.

#266/July '05. The Carbonas, MDC, Destrux, Unkind, Hiretsukan, Giant Haystacks, Ohuzaru, Teenage Harlets, Michigan scene report, San Diego scene report, Eugene, OR scene report, photos.

#267/August '05. Knugen Faller, Sleeper Cell, Motorama, Gulcher Records history, Army of Jesus, The Slicks, Thee Merry Widows, Rotten Sound, The Faction (UK), Czech and New Zealand scene reports.

#268/September '05. Signal Lost, Gulcher Records history part two, Teenage Bottlerocket, Mattilda (aka Matt Bernstein Sycamore), The Spectacle, Bang Sugar Bang, Chumbawamba, Reason of Insanity, Forward To Death, Flyer art, Florida Scene Report, Bay Area scene report, photos.

#269/October '05. Hammer, Desastre, Human Eye, Les Bellas, Gasmask Terror, Randy "Biscuit" Turner tribute, Stalag 17 (UK), Stepbrothers, Retching Red, Weaving the Deathbag, Gather, Chicago and SoCal scene reports.

#270/November '05. Clorox Girls European Tour, Czolgosz, Regulations, Time Flys, Taxi, No More Lies, Oi!!, Paddy Costello of the Dillinger Four, Smartpils, Revenge of Mongoloid, Pisschrist, Scene reports: Puerto Rico, UK, Russia.

#271/December '05. Besthöven, Abductee SD, Tractor Sex Fatality, George Harrison, Deathtoll, Photos by icki, Ice & The Iced, the Ulcers, Chimps Eat Bananas, Deranged / Criminal IQ / Kick'n'Punch Records. Scene reports: Iowa, Maine, Illinois.

#272/January '06. Conga Fury, Let's Grow, Frustration, Bastardass, Icons of Filth, Burial, Hrydjuverk, Cranked Up!, Urrke T & the Midlife Crisis, Tropezio, *Baboon of Sickness* zine. Scene reports: Austin, France, Michigan, Larry Wolfley photos.

#273/February '06. Fuses, Endstand, Out Cold, Pedestrians, Acts of Sedition, BadEatingHabits, Western Addiction, Jesus Fucking Christ, Toxic Waste, Punk photo spread, St. Louis, USA & Brighton, UK scene reports.

#274/March '06. Best of 2005, Formaldehyde Junkies, Brutal Knights, Kansan Uutiset, Hatred Surge, A-Heads, Manikin, Upinatem, Hips, Boston scene report, Punk photo spread.

#275/April '06. History of ABC No Rio (Part One), Ringers, Missbrukarna, '90s garage punk scumpit, Anatomi-71, After the Bombs, Rubella Ballet, RIP Pig Champion, Ricky Adam interview and photographs, Sean McGhee, Hard Skin US tour diary.

#276/May '06. "Is Business Killing Punk Rock?" business survey (Part One), History of ABC No Rio (Part Two), Vitamin X Asian Pacific tour diary, Soviet Valves Suburban Death Machine, Frustrations, George Hurchalla, Scene reports: Czech Republic and Greece.

#277/June '06. "Is Business Killing Punk Rock?" business survey (Part Two), Imperial Leather, Boom Boom Kid, Vitamin X Asian Pacific Tour (part two), "How to Make It Big!" by the Phantom Surfers, Magrudergrind, Poland.

#278/July '06. Billy Childish, Death Token, The First Step, Ramsey Kanaan of AK Press, Headache City, Deconditioned, Under Pressure, Insuiciety, Instigators, Malaysia Scene, Bay Area Scene Pics.

#279/August '06. Mika Miko, The Fall, Cardiac Arrest, Digger & the Pussycats, Massmord, Insect Warfare, The Astronauts, Canary Islands Photo Spread, Four Slicks, The Fallout, PAWNS, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, & Umeå, Sweden scenes.

#280/September '06. Hjerte Stop, Grupo Sub-1, Desperate Bicycles, Bill Daniel interview and photo spread, APF Brigade, Disconvenience, Southkore Fest photo spread, Rosenbombs, Up the Voltage, Euro photo spread, Svartenbrandt, Asheville, NC & world wide punk scene reports.

#281/October '06. Out With a Bang, Redd Kross, Derek Lyn Plastic, We March, Alan Milman, Rat Traps, Blood Robots, The Scarred, Gilbert Switzer, Japan & US photo spreads, Sweden & UK scene reports.

#282/November '06. The Feelers, PESD, Toxic Ephex, Auktion, Bruise Violet, *Trust* fanzine, The Homosexuals, The Effigies, Rat City Riot, New York City & North Carolina scene reports.

#283/December '06. Jay Reatard interview & photos, Crimes Against Humanity Records, A Touch of Hysteria, Doris Fanzine, Kvoteringen, '90s Punk Scumpit Part II, Black Chrome, The Dirty Water Club, photos, Tokyo scene report.

#284/January '07. Margaret Thrasher, 924 Gilman at 20 Years, Order of the White Rose, Regress, Subhumans (UK) Part One, Blank Its, Condenada, Genetic Control, photos, Syracuse & San Diego scene reports.

#285/February '07. Randy "Biscuit" Turner of the Big Boys & the early Texas punk scene, Lemuria, Ruin, Subhumans (UK) Part Two, The Blinds, Tranzistors, ANS, Riot This, La Piovra, Bay Area scene pics, Barcelona, Spain scene report.

#286/March '07. Best of 2006, Smartut Kahol Lavan, Electric Kisses, Holy Shit!, Lost Cherrees Part One, Go!, Kraljevo, Serbia, and Bakersfield, CA scene reports.

#287/April '07. Alicja Trout, Keith Rosson (*Avow* zine), Crap Corps, The Vicious, Scum System Kill, Lost Cherrees Part Two, Restless Youth, SBV, Australia, Kyiv, Ukraine, and Pittsburgh, PA scene reports.

#288/May '07. Clockcleaner, Pisschrist, The Rats (Sweden), Conflict (US), The Viletones, Violent Turnor, Czech Republic and East Texas scene reports.

#289/June '07. Ultimo Resorte, Kursk, Masstrauma, Social Circkle, Final Approach, Post Punk Kitchen, Southern Death Cult, Portland Drummers, Timisoara, Copenhagen, and Pampanga scene reports.

#290/July '07. Stormcrow, Merkit, Solid Decline, Monster Squad, Sex Vid, Vivisick, Warkrime, Top Ten, *We're Gonna Fight* zine, White Cross, Berlin scene report.

#291/August '07. *MRR* 25th Anniversary Issue. Martin Sprouse, Tim Yohannon, No Slogan, Ruidosa Inmundicia, Chinese Telephones, Vaseline Children, Anti-System, Dave Roche, 6-page retrospective photo-spread, Kawakami/ Disclose obituary, Brazil scene report.

#292/September '07. New Bloods, Chronic Seizure, Outraged, Geriatric Unit, Active Distribution, Gruk, The Mods, No Defences, The Fakes, Trashies Tour Report, Mexico scene report.

#293/October '07. Punk and Immigration Theme issue w/ interviews, articles, and stories. Anti-You, Loser Life, Political Asylum, Olympia scene report.

#294/November '07. The Hipshakes, Neverending Party, Punk & Immigration article, Finally Punk, La Lucha Para La Justicia en Guatemala, Leftover Crack, AOA.

#295/December '07. Surrender, What If Gods Lie?, The Crawlers, 2:20, The Joneses, Libertario Magazine, Bad Samaritans, Shrapnel, Untermensch.

#296/January '08. Hellshock, Mario Panciera, Anathema, The System, Eddy Current Suppression Ring, The Voids, Cinecyde, Kyklooppien Sukupuutto, Punch In The Face, BSA.

#297/February '08. Marie Kanger-Born, Thrillhouse Records, Contaminators, Oi Polloi, Obstruction, I Walk the Line, Utopia

#298/March '08. Best of 2007, Autistic Youth, White Lung, Karma Sutra, Clusterfuck, Sharon Cheslow, Slaughter of the Innocent.

#299/April '08. Government Warning, Age, Off With Their Heads, Guided Cradle, Go It Alone, Fy Fan, Daily Void, Hungarian Scene history.

#300/May '08. NorCal Punk Special: Fix My Head, Black Rainbow, Tank Crimes, Young Offenders, Church Police, Traditional Fools, Six Weeks/Short Fast & Loud, Ecoli.

#301/June '08. Underground Railroad to Candyland, Straightjacket Nation, Red Dons, Spectres, Dean Dirg, Kola, Los Violadores, the Sears, Tentacles of Destruction, Antibodies, Head on Collision.

#302/July '08. Giuda, Wasted Time, Reality, Sin Ordeh, Teenage Head, Antidote, La Urss, Canadian Rifle, Seasick, Israel & Japan scenes.

#303/August '08. Double Negative, Burnt Cross, Masapunk, Chicago Clitfest, Intifada, Nuclear Death Terror, Raw Power, Unlovables, Waste, Chaos In Tejas photospread, Houston and Grand Rapids scene reports.

#304/September '08. Raymond Pettibon, John Stabb of Government Issue, Cola Freaks, Measure [sa], The Press, XYX, Simply Saucer, Kulturkampf, Andy T, FPO, and Columbia scene report.

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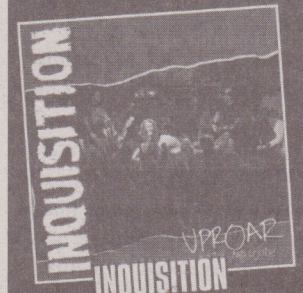

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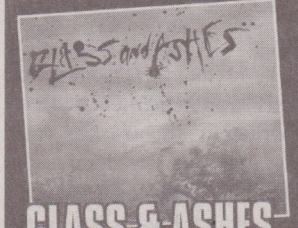

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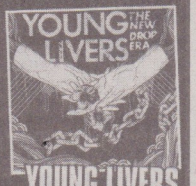

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Hello MRR—

Marcelo here. Just to let you know, I got *MRR* #303, and to be honest, the guy Nick Mangel did not get the idea of the release. The review is just too lacking in information that it is a shame that he is doing reviews for *MRR*. If the information I sent were not enough, he, as a journalist should take them from anywhere, like from my website or from Dave Phillips' site that are both included on the artwork of the CD.

Let's start:

It is not a Fear Of God release, but a Dave Phillips release.

It is not a discography. Otherwise, it would be titled "Discography."

If Fear Of God is awesome like he wrote, and the CD did not do enough justice for a band of their status, he would notice that the songs are little bit different than what Fear Of God was and try to better check what the release is about.

I am not complaining about the bad review, I am not that stupid, but the lack of information in it. If he is not able to understand these things, next time I send you anything for review, I will send you a review written by myself! Sorry, I am just being honest.

Take care

—Marcelo

Hey Marcelo—

Thanks for the info on the record, because the correct information does deserve to be out there. Since the Fear of God logo is on it, Fear of God artwork, and Fear of God song titles, and what else… the music is Fear of God too. Yeah it's "reworked" or "remixed" apparently, but still very recognizable as Fear Of God. These are the facts. I think it's fairly understandable that this could be confusing, and perhaps make people think it is a Fear Of God release, even. Yes, It also has the name Dave Phillips on it. Who is Dave Phillips and how does that relate? I still don't know. The packaging has no information about what it is.

And oh, I did my duty and tried to find out online what the deal with this record was, and yes, I tried to visit your labels website several times and have found it to be down (I even checked from 2 different computers). I checked today it still seems to be fucked up and unreadable and doesn't load. So that didn't help much. And an Internet search provided very little information. So I'm left with a record with Fear Of God art, music, logo, and Fear Of God music. Oh and also, your label did release a Fear Of God 2xlp discography titled Zeitgeist *(ironically not "Discography") a year or so ago! Would it be impossible this is the CD version? Given this information what would you think?*

By the way Marcelo, I am no journalist. I doubt anybody at MRR *would claim to be one. I am just a dude who volunteers his time and effort to a cause he believes in (DIY punk and* MRR*). I do my duty and make a good effort to try to provide people the requisite information. If you could understand that a little and help us out by providing some information on what you must admit is a somewhat atypical release that would be cool. As reviewers we do our best to try to track down as much information about a record as possible. We make a good faith effort, but we are not paid, not professionals, and certainly not journalists, and it is not our job to promote your record for you, or sweat bullets trying to clarify what a record is or isn't. You need to provide the information, somehow, somewhere, some way. If you don't, that's not our fault. I think you are making a good decision to send information about your releases to us in the future with the record you are sending for* MRR *to review. Most labels do this.*

Anyway, I regret the confusion.

*—Nick Mangel/*MRR

DX—

Firstly, you've written some solid material in the past, so do not take this as an indictment of all of your written work, however, your September 2008 (#304) column deserves a dressing down. Leaving aside some of your more dubious claims, which I will allow to go unanswered in an extension of rhetorical license, but that "music glorifying 'youth' and all of the shitty attributes of being young" is unlistenable, warrants a response. The attributes of being young that contributed to the fact that "being young sucked," continue well into full adulthood. Those born before either Reagan or Thatcher (or whoever you wristie giving kangaroos had over there) took power are still disgusted by their lives. I'm not sure how your socialized sex ed. classes work over there, but "a black hole of damaged relationships" is not the exclusive purview of youth. The same aspects of personality that prevented me, or anyone else, from meaningfully connecting to another human being did not disappear along with my virility in my mid 20s. "Mental illness?" Youth? Seriously? Self-hating-whack-job-ie-ness corresponds nearly directly to age. Unemployment I will chalk up to a difference of socio-political conditions, because while Australia may have a labor situation that improves with age, that in the US is somewhat different. "Chronic diet problems" seem to worsen with most of these dudes I see getting fatter and fatter. Like I'm trying to stay level but what the fuck are you even talking about? Diet? Really? Fuck. Petty crimes… I'm getting sick of pointing out shit, and as for self-hatred, see above comment. So maybe these older people yearning to be "part of the 'kids'" are simply indulging in a glorification of these negative traits they exhibited in youth and lack the maturity to just get over it. But, wiseguy, these folks are the people making the shitty bands you dig on in *Distort*. And the ability to crown Amdi Petersen Armi king is an ability unique to youth. Grownups have no way ever heard of that shit when we're trying to plug some cunt, or work a dumb job, or "be in a serious relationship" (which is the one way to actually increase our self-hatred. Well that and then having the sinking realization that you are getting too old to plug any cunt that isn't slobbering away on a disgusting barstool.) I'll stick with Metallica.

—Beckett

Cleveland, OH

Beckett—

Shfffffffffffffffff… The biggest flaw in the writing of that column that I'd concede to was my inability to convey that my reluctance to join the fountain of youth brigade is related to my own gag reflex kicking in regarding "A blackhole of damaged relationships, mental illness, unemployment, chronic diet problems, petty crime and self hatred," which was actually

supposed to be specifically about MY life and my fuckin' problems, not yours or any of the people around you. Why would I talk about my life? Because I'm a conceited retard with a space to talk about it, and Maximum *pays me really handsomely to do it.*

More specifically, because I was attempting to explain a pretty simple concept: you listen to music you can relate to. I don't mean to suggest that the problems of "damaged relationships, mental illness, unemployment, chronic diet problems, petty crime and self hatred" cease to be when you finally learn how to work a corkscrew or operate a VHS machine—which seems to be your main gripe with my column—but that reinforces my point more than dresses it down. I'm trying to suggest these problems are difficult to convey with an interesting perspective at any age, but it seems as time kicks on, less and less of the interesting perspective is coming from people who grew up with Myspace profiles. Of course, hearing about heartbreak and self-hatred from anyone is pathetic, but it's a little more interesting to me, at this stage of my life, coming from someone who has graduated high school.

All this said, I have written better than this before, and I probably will again. Though largely misinformed and presumptuous, I appreciate the verbose critique. Cheers, cunt.
—Daniel

Dear Maximum Rock and Rollers—
In response to the letter written by one Karl Hensel (Bridge 9 Records) in your August issue… Seriously dude, lighten the fuck up. It's embarrassing enough selling New Found Glory silk flags and "Brokeback Jeter" T-shirts—stop feeling butt hurt and get over it.
—YOTG D00D Crew

MRR—
My utmost punk rock sacrilegious sickness is spat out my face straight at you. Cheers to homemade booze and noize not musik! I've been turning the pages of your zine since the mid '80s. *MRR* and *Flipside* were what we had in our quest of punk 'n' doom in SoCal, so, a big thanks is extended to the diatribe you all build. Now that I'm in my 30s (37, yipes!) I decided to put a voice to these exploits in my head. I sold my soul to punk in '82 or '83 in Redondo and have been damned since. I love being punk rock even in this prison where I fester and rot inside this razorwire melancholy, I'm still a punk rockeer and shant be prouder! Up the punx!!! Can I sue punk rock? It's its fault I'm in prison. Haha, I'm going to sue myself because I've done some real rotten shit to myself. Seriously though, I would not change too much in this script of this curse I call life. Remain steadfast and stay the course of a punk rock way of life. If we fail at one thing, get up and try harder. If we don't like the direction we're in, change it. We must continue to work together. A united front is peerless. We must support our scene or it will perish. Punx not dead and it never was. Punk rock is a way of life. It's our life, I say, and I wouldn't have it any other way.

I've got three years to three years left to give this shit filled prison of unlimited disappointment. I have been busted for three years and I miss talking punk rock more than I miss anything. I do not woe to me, I'm not in misery, for I got a punk rock life to force on the powers that shan't be. ACAB I say. If anyone wants to help me combat this lethargic fuck'n boredom then write a letter, unleash some madness trapped inside yer skull. Thanks for your time, and remember, if you don't like it, change it! Support our scene, for there is nothing better than punk rock.
Catch you on the flipside of this punk rock record we call life.
—Brody Davis #F57379
B3-215
PO Box 911
Imperial, CA 92251

Hey!—
I'm Loewe from Berlin. I sent you a copy of the *Viva Köpi* compilation LP for a review. In the last issue there was a really nice review, but you have made a small mistake. The compilation was released by my label, Behind the Scenes. I don't think it's too important, but for people or labels who are interested in the comp it's really hard to order without a contact. Here's the info:

Behind the Scenes
Wrangelstr. 86 1.HH 1.QG
10997 Berlin
Germany
behindthescenes@web.de

Take care
—Loewe

Dear Dave and MRR—
Thank you for your response to my letter regarding black metal. I'd like one chance to respond in kind and then I'll leave you alone.

I agree that we all must draw our own lines about what is acceptable and what is not. We all give and take and have our own reasons for our decisions. As you point out, by paying taxes my money funds many activities/policies/actions I disagree with. The option is jail-time or leaving friends and family behind and move to another country. That's not a sacrifice I'm prepared to make so I pay like a good American. That does not relieve me of my moral obligation when it comes to spending the rest of my disposable income. Boycotting record labels and bands that have hateful agendas is quite easy. It has no ill affect and actually leaves me with more spending money. I'm willing to bet you would not shop at Hot Topic as a matter of principle. Avoiding questionable bands is just as easy. Graveland and Thor's Hammer do not hide their racist views. No Colours Records gives them a means to spread their message so it's pretty likely they are racist as well. I Shalt Become and every other band on their roster is not simply "guilty by association" as you put it. They are active participants. They could have easily chosen another label or gone DIY (it's easy enough for a band to do) but they chose not to. Profits from their releases go back into the machine, giving the label owners money and quite possibly funding the next Graveland release. Just as bad, they're recruiting by leading their fans towards checking out other bands on the label.

It appears I Shalt Become may no longer be on No Colours but it's a safe bet it's not because they had a change of heart. It's practically impossible to get a band to speak out against the nazi bands. Read the interviews. The standard line is, "I am not political. The actions of others do not concern me." Weak.

My vote is to keep black metal out of *MRR* all together, not just because it has nothing to do with punk, but because the whole scene is shady. You can draw your own lines but I think you're making excuses and, at the risk of sounding cute, my answer to you is "Don't Try."
Thanks for your time,
—Steve
PS: You were quite right about nsbm.com. They are obviously trying to bolster their ranks by lumping in any band who ever used controversial imagery. I should have look at the site more thoroughly.

Finally...the Ruido LP

Ruido s/t LP

Ruido in the "early days" when they were a dual-vocal band with equal parts grind, crust and straight ahead hardcore. Songs in Spanish and English including covers of Agnostic Front, 7 Seconds and Fartz. (on Multi-colored vinyl)

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Insult "I Wanna Be A Burn Victim" CD
Lets Grow "Neverending Story" 7"
Larkin "Curse of Our Fathers" CD
Larkin "Alexandra" CDEP
Larkin "Reckoning" CD
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TRUSTY DEMO

A SPECIAL 20 YEAR ANNIVERSARY RELEASE FROM ONE OF AMERICA'S GREAT PUNK BANDS

During my senior year of High School in the fall of 1989, I vividly remember attending a show at the famous but now defunct Antenna Club in Memphis, Tennessee. The headlining band was SNFU, one of my all time favorites and I was excited to get to see them for the first time. I arrived early knowing there would probably be an opening act but didn't know who and honestly didn't much care as I assumed it was only going to be a local band to fill time before SNFU took the stage

At just after 8:30 PM, a hardcore group from Little Rock, Arkansas called TRUSTY started to warm up for their opening set. They were kind of a rag-tag looking band who sort of looked as though they could have been High School friends that maybe played various instruments and threw themselves together at the last minute to play this gig,. I remember saying to myself "what's up with these guys?" Are they gonna play metal cover tunes for us and try to pass it off as punk?" Or worse yet, from the looks of their bass player's snakeskin cowboy boots and neatly tucked button down dress shirt, were they Arkansas good ole boys with an affinity for country?" Time for me to hit the restroom.

When I came back into the staging area I was absolutely stopped dead in my tracks. My friend had joined in the pit to slam dance with a growing group of others and the music filling the room was incredible! It was hard and fast but very melodic and well written. After the first song my friend left the pit and rejoined me. He asked "who the hell are these guys and what's their story?" I replied "I don't know, but they are totally awesome!"

When TRUSTY finally finished I was pumped up for SNFU but must admit that I was a little concerned for a letdown after that performance. I wondered how the hell they were gonna top that? They didn't, but did put on a great and memorable show. All I can tell you is that I walked out of there with the purchase of a TRUSTY demo tape that I listened to all the way back home.

I hope you enjoy this demo as much as I have over the last 20 years and that you too will add it to your collection. If you're a true punk connoisseur like myself, I think you'll agree that this was one demo tape that deserved to be shared with the world.

– Warm Regards, Darron J Hemann President/FounderDC-Jam Records

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MAXIMUM ROCK 'N' ROLL PUNK HEALTH SPECIAL ISSUE:

BEER IS AN ANTIBIOTIC,

IT FIGHTS INFECTIONS

↑ EXCERPT FROM "PUNK MEDICAL MYTHS" BY CAROLINE PAQUITA. OBVIOUSLY NOT INTENDED TO BE REAL MEDICAL ADVICE.

HEY PUNK ROCKER! REMEMBER WHEN YOU BROKE YOUR NOSE DRUNK IN THE PIT? CAME DOWN WITH THAT NASTY BATCH OF SCABIES? CHRONIC HEALTH CONDITION? BAD EXPERIENCE AT THE CLINIC? WE ARE LOOKING FOR CONTRIBUTIONS OF SHORT PERSONAL STORIES, COMIX, PHOTOS, AND ARTICLES ON THE THEME OF PUNKS AND HEALTH.

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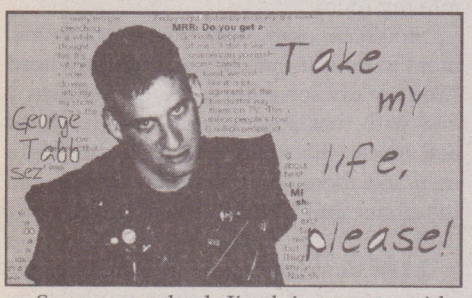
COLUMNS



Some years back I'm lying on my side, with my pants below my knees, and I feel the cold white paper that's on the table against my skin.

"Just relax," says Dr. Hurle, "this won't hurt a bit."

But I know it will. It does every time he puts on that rubber glove, lubes himself up with K-Y, and sticks his forefinger up my ass. I try to relax, but the thought of a finger up my butt makes me uncomfortable. Especially the finger of a fifty-something year old man.

"George," says the Doctor, "Relax. If you don't, I won't be able to get up there."

I try to relax my asshole enough so that he can stick his finger up there. He tries to get in there a couple of times, and finally has to use some more lube.

"Ouch," I exclaim, "that fucking hurts!"

"Sorry," Dr. Hurle kinda of mumbles, and starts to poke his finger around the inside of my small intestines. I moan in agony, and swear at him pretty loudly.

"I'm almost done," he says, and then feels around for my prostate. Just like I knew he would. He finds it, and starts to touch it. I scream loud, and he asks me if it hurts. I tell him "yes." He tells me it is inflamed, something I already figured, and then he removes his finger. Slowly. As he pulls it out, I feel like I am having a bowel movement right in front of him. I feel humiliated.

"Here's something to wipe up with," says Dr. Hurle, as he hands me a wad of tissue. I wipe myself and hand him back the wad. He looks at it, and me, and then throws it into a garbage can with the "biohazard" logo thing on it.

"Well, George," starts Dr. Hurle, and I know what he is gonna say next. He's gonna tell me I have an enlarged prostate, and to quit drinking so much, and fuck more often. "You have an enlarged prostate. You should really consider consuming less alcohol, and you should strive for an active sexual life."

I just look at him. He tells me the same thing every time. And every time I say I'll do what he says, but then, don't. I mean, hell, less drinking, more sex? I wish. And if I was having all that sex that he wanted me to have, then I don't think I'd drink so much. But, well, since during that time in my life, I wasn't having a lot of sex, with other people, anyway, I drank a lot. It was kind of like the chicken and the egg. Cause versus symptom. My penis versus a beer.

I start to pull up my pants, and then remember I forgot to ask Dr. Hurle about one thing.

"Umm," I stutter, "Dr. Hurle? Can you look at my, um, err, penis, there may be something wrong with it." There was, but I didn't want to tell him. There was something really wrong. It was all red and sore, and was a bit bloody, up near the head of the damn thing. But you really couldn't see it when it was shrunk up in fear from a finger up the old ass.

"What seems to be the problem", says Dr. Hurle, and I see in his eyes from behind his wire frame glasses that he really doesn't want to play with my penis today.

"I don't know, you should look at it. I don't know what's wrong with it. It just hurts."

Dr. Hurle sighs, and then begins to examine my pecker. At first he feels my testicles, weighs them in his hands or something. Then he pulls on the head of my penis, and he sees the sore on the top of the shaft.

"Holy Cow"! Dr. Hurle exclaims. He's old fashioned like that.

"What?" I say, looking at him in his white doctor jacket, with stethoscope around his neck. I look at him, and feel my heart begin to race. He's nervous.

"George. You have Herpes. And from what I can tell, this is a very severe case."

I start to swallow quickly, and get very nervous. He releases my penis, and tells me to pull up my pants. I sit up on the table, and do so.

"George, I have never seen a case of Herpes like this," says Dr. Hurle, "I want you to go see a specialist. Dr. Rector. He's a urologist. He'll know what to do."

"That's it?" I say to him as he starts to leave the room.

"Yes. Go see Dr. Rector. I'll give the information to the nurse up front. I'm so sorry for you. Remember, don't drink so much, and have a more active sex life."

I look at him as he says that, and he quickly excuses himself and tells me to have a nice day.

***

That night at home, I'm eating dinner with my Mom, and step dad, Nick.

"So George, what did Dr. Hurle have to say today at your physical?" my mom asks me as I eat my hamburger on a roll with lettuce, tomato, and mayonnaise.

"That I'm totally fine," I lie to her.

"How's your prostate? Still enlarged?" she asks. I hate when my mom asks about my prostate.

"Yeah, still enlarged, and, umm, there is something else."

Suddenly my mom gets that look of panic in her eyes. Like when I fell off my tricycle when I was three. Or when I took my guitar on stage, and hit some jerk in the face who kept undoing my shoelaces.

"What? What's wrong?" she demanded. And I could see she was almost near tears. Moms.

"Nothing," I say, "nothing really, only I have, umm, errr..."

"What George?" says Nick, trying to make me say it so my Mom doesn't have a heart attack waiting for me to sputter out that I have Herpes. The Big H. V.D.

"Well," I begin, "Dr. Hurle says I have Herpes. I don't..."

Suddenly my mom is in tears. And Nick is staring at me, in shock. I don't know what to say, so I just try to comfort them both.

"It's no big deal. It's only Herpes. It'll go away. Really."

My mom stops sobbing enough to say, "George, my son, has Herpes. I have a

child with Herpes. My God."

I feel awful, and want to go home and crawl under my bed and hide.

"George, what did Dr. Hurle say?" asks Nick, trying to be the logical, sensible, and a know-it-all, as usual.

"Well," I start, "he says I have a terrible case of Herpes, and to go see Dr. Rector."

"My son has Herpes," sobs my mom, "now he'll have to advertise in the back of the Village Voice 'SWM with Herpes seeks SWF,'" and with that, she starts to cry some more.

I guess Herpes was a big deal back then. I try to comfort her and tell her it's nothing, but she won't listen to me. Finally Nick calms her down, and says that we should wait and hear what Dr. Rector has to say. I feel so sick I can't finish my hamburger.

***

A week later I am in Dr. Rector's office, looking through magazines like Modern Maturity and Highlights. I figure he sees all sizes of penises.

"Mr. Tabb," says a cute blonde nurse, "the doctor will see you now."

I go into a little room, and wait around for about ten minutes with nothing to read. I wish I had taken *Highlights* in with me. That Goofus and Gallant really crack me up.

Finally Dr. Rector strolls in, and we shake hands. I kinda of wish I didn't, seeing that he was a urologist and all, and I *know* where his hands have been.

He asks me what the problem is and I kind of stutter, "well, um, err, umm..."

Eventually he just tells me to drop my pants, and I do.

He starts to examine my penis with some magnifying glasses he has on. He tugs at it, twists it, and I feel blood begin to rush down there. I try to think of sports or something. I don't like getting erections with fifty-something-year old men.

"Well George," he begins, "Dr. Hurle sent you over here with a case of herpes, and it looks like that is what you have."

He looks at my penis some more, and I begin to think he likes looking at it a bit too much, so I yank it away from him and pull up my pants.

"George, while you're here, I might as well check out your prostate," says Dr. Rector, probably upset I pulled up my pants so quick.

"No way, Jose" I say to him, "Dr. Hurle checked it out last week, and it's enlarged, as usual. Sorry, but my ass just isn't up to it."

"Okay, George," he says, all doctorly and stuff, "if that's the way you feel."

"Well," says Dr. Rector, with his magnifying glasses still on so he looks like Vincent Price or Jeff Goldblum from *The Fly*, "you have a severe case of Herpes. There is not much I can do. I think you should see a specialist."

I tell him I thought he was the specialist, and that is why Dr. Hurle sent me to him.

"No," he says, laughing, "I'm not a specialist in herpes," and the way he said herpes, I could tell he was disgusted. I mean, he was a doctor on the Upper East Side. A doctor in that circle of New York Hospital doctors. Some of the best in the world. He didn't want to be dealing with me. Some downtown punk rocker guy, with fucking herpes. Geez.

"You should go see a dermatologist, a skin doctor" he tells me. I just look at him, and wonder why I wasted my time going up there.

"Do you have one, or should I recommend one?" he asks.

I tell him I have one. Dr. Rose. A really nice guy, who, like my other doctors, is also on the Upper East Side. Dr. Rose treats all the stars. Like Woody Allen, all those fancy tall no-breasted models, and he even treated Jackie O. I saw her once when I was up there getting my zits popped by a large Swedish woman named Helga.

"Okay then George," says Dr. Rector, "then good luck to you. And are you sure you don't want me to just feel your prostate to make sure it's okay?"

I run out of there as fast as I can.

***

That night I'm out to dinner with my mom and Nick.

"What did Dr. Rector have to say about your, umm, you know," said my mom, unable to say the "H" word.

"He said I have it, mom," I said to her as I took a bite out of my hamburger.

"Well, George, what should you do?" asked Nick. He had a look of genuine concern on his face. Like the look he sometimes gets when one of his cameras stops working, and he as to fiddle around with the insides of it.

"I dunno. See Dr. Rose, I think," I answered.

Suddenly tears start to well up in my mom's eyes. She's gonna cry again. I feel as though I am a really bad son. I have brought shame to my family, and to the Tabb name. I have herpes. I may as well be dead.

"Dr. Rose?" asks my mom, all upset. "He has to know?"

I tell her that everything will be all right, and that it is no big deal. That lots of people have herpes, and that I will be fine. She doesn't believe me and asks Nick. He tells her I'll be fine. She kinda stops crying, and finishes her dinner of french fries and coffee.

Later that night, as I'm lying in bed, watching *Star Trek*, and thinking about how I'd love to boff Yeoman Rand, but what if I gave her herpes, and did they have a cure for it in the 24th Century, my mom walks into my room.

"You'll be okay," my mom says to me, more to herself than to me. I nod my head "You are my son and I love you," she says, and with that, kisses me on the forehead and leaves the room. I want to die. Right then and there. That, or runaway and join the circus, and never, ever, come home.

***

A few days later I am in the office of Dr. Rose, staring at some super model from across the room. I pretend to read *Esquire*, *New York*, or some such crap, but really I am peeking over the top of the damn thing at the brunette across the room. She is beautiful. Her legs are really long, and she is wearing a short skirt. She has nice sized breasts, for a super model, and really pretty blue eyes. I feel myself starting to get hard, and it hurts.

Damn herpes.

I continue to pretend to read the magazine some more while I stare at the model. I start to wonder what's wrong with her. Maybe she has a cyst.

Maybe a pimple. But where? I imagine it is on her breast, or near her vagina. How'd I'd love to be Dr. Rose, and get to pop the damn thing. Wow. I start to think maybe punk rock wasn't the best career choice.

"Mr. Tabb," says the middle-aged nurse with a heavy Queens accent, "Dr. Rose will see you now."

I follow her to a small room, and then sit on a table covered with paper. Dr. Rose walks into the room. He has a big smile on his face, and I start to feel okay. I like this guy.

"How's your Mom? Nick? Becky, Nick's Mom?" asks Dr. Rose. I tell him everyone is OK, and thanks for asking.

"And how are you, George?" he asks. I look at him, with his boyish good looks, and gentle smile, and suddenly get very, very jealous. Right after me he was gonna see that model, and I know, I know he was gonna get to take her skirt off. Damn him.

"I'm okay," I begin, "but not really."

"Please explain, George," he says in a very calm voice. Like the HAL 2000, in *2001*.

"Well," I start, "I went to see Dr. Hurle.

He looked at my, umm, errr, penis, and said I have herpes. He sent me to Dr. Rector, and he too said I have herpes. And then I..."

"Slow down, George, relax," he said to me in a soothing voice, and I slowed down a bit.

"Anyway," I continued, "my mom is very upset, and so is Nick, and now I have it and I'm never ever gonna find a girlfriend and I'm going to die not ever having sex again and..."

"It's OK, George, it's OK" said Dr. Rose as he rested his hand upon my shoulder. "Just relax. I'll take a look at it, and we'll see what we can do. Don't worry."

I thanked him for being so nice and then he told me to pull down my pants so I did. Then he said the underwear, too.

Dr. Rose starts to fiddle with my penis, looking at it from all angles. He then puts on a pair of magnifying glasses over his glasses, and looks at the sore on my penis. It's all red and bloody and stuff, and he just keeps looking at it.

"I'm doomed, right?" I ask him, knowing he is going to tell me that this is the worst case he has ever seen, and that he wants to send me to Geneva as a lab rat, so I can be written up in medical journals coast to coast.

"Hmmm," says Dr. Rose. That's all.

"What?" I say, distressed and undressed.

"Hmmm," he says again.

I start to panic. It's worse than a trip to Geneva. I'm going to die. I have herpes type alpha-beta. The deadly kind. The kind they haven't discovered yet. The kind that makes your penis fall right off as you are urinating. I could see my self fishing around the toilet, trying to retrieve my dick, and re-attach the damn thing. Meanwhile, I know I wouldn't be able to, and I'd have to live my short time left without one. I'd never be able to change in the gym again, in the men's locker room, anyway. I'd never get an erection again. My right hand would miss my penis so much it would fall off. Hell, I'd have to sit down while I peed. Life was not fair.

"Hmmm," says Dr. Rose again, stirring me out of my paranoid but true thoughts.

"What's wrong with me? Am I going to die?" I ask him.

Dr. Rose turns my penis over a couple of more times, and then tells me to pull up my pants. I do.

"Well George," says Dr. Rose, "I have something to tell you."

"Yes Dr. Rose?" I say, with my voice quivering.

"George," he began as my heart raced like crazy, "First of all, you don't have herpes."

I let out a big breath of air. I didn't have herpes. I was saved.

"But," continued Dr. Rose, and my heart leapt to my throat. I should have known there was going to be a but. He was going to tell me it was worse. I had penis cancer, and one week to live.

"But," he repeated, "you *do* have to use a lubricant when you masturbate. If you don't, this will keep happening."

And with that he patted me on the shoulder and began to walk out of the room.

"That's it? I'm okay? My penis isn't going to fall off? I not going to die? I don't have penis cancer?" I couldn't believe it.

"No," laughed Dr. Rose, "You'll be just fine."

But I knew I wasn't. How was I ever going to explain *this* to my mom? I think I would have rather had herpes.

Take My Life, Please.

Endnotes:

1. www.myspace.com/helpgeorgetabb and Ramones007 on Xbox Live!

2. Got lots of killer games this month. Check out *Unreal Tournament 3*, *Gears of War*, *Epic*, *Civilization Revolution*, *Wall-E*, *Destroy All Humans: Big Willy Unleashed*, *My Weightloss Coach*, *Death Jr.: Root of Evil*, *Wacky Races: Crash & Dash*, and *NCAA Football 09*. *Hellboy: The Science of Evil* sucks. Upon further play, *Iron Man* for the DS and Xbox360 is really not that bad. Lastly, *Cake Mania 2* from Majesco for the DS is for girls. Or guys who wear their pants. That must be why I like this!

3. Again, Whole Hog has a new album out on South of Evil Records called *Debt To Rock-n-Roll*. Great great stuff. Slayer meets Skynard meets Nashville Pussy meets The Ramones at a shemale BBQ! On MySpace, check them out as well as Potato Famine, Disco Assault, Bloodrunners, The Rydells, and Full Boar. Personally, I think MySpace is awesome just because it's so easy to check out so many cool bands. But ignore Furious George, they suck.

What's Okay

I'm trying to think about what went wrong with the conversation, I mean where it went wrong or why I mean I thought it was going to be a good conversation but it wasn't. Sure, there was that moment of release when I suddenly felt calm instead of shaking inside and maybe outside too and freezing, really freezing does emotional release make you freezing no that's nerves. But usually I get sweaty when I'm nervous.

The release only lasted a moment, Derek said catharsis I think that's a good word. I asked him if that's what he was looking for. No. He kept saying this is too much, too much to think about he hadn't expected it but he always says that. That's why I suggested ahead of time that we have a conversation about our relationship, when we were actually getting along and not in a sudden emergency and he would have as much time to think about it ahead of time at me. But then it became an emergency anyway. And I don't know why.

The first thing I said was: you're the most important person in my life. That was hard to say because I'm not sure whether he wants it that way or whether I want it that way or whether I believe there should be a most important person in my life instead of just people, most important people. But still that's what I feel, which is maybe different than what I want to believe. It's something in my body, like I don't have to work so hard. Something nurturing about our relationship on such a deep level and sure, part of that comes from knowing each other for 16-years, believing in some of the same dreams although maybe that's changing but still there's the history of yearning together. And so I said I feel confident about the longevity of our relationship, I feel safe in so many ways and I trust you on a deep level but still I don't feel secure.

I get so nervous about such tiny things, my whole body clenches I stop breathing I wait till the end of the conversation to say: do you think it would be better to meet at my house, because it's easier to be physically close? I mean because we can sit in my kitchen or on the sofas, but at your house it's me sitting on the chair while you're in bed unless I get in bed with you and that's only comfortable for so long. That was over the phone and he said sure but I was scared I don't like being scared all the time even when I'm not scared maybe I'm scared.

And when we were talking a week or two ago and I was saying that it used to be that direct action activism or my friends were the most important thing in my life,

and maybe it would alternate back and forth, but over the last few years I feel like it's been my writing and part of that is because that's where I feel I can be most effective right now but also it's because of disappointments with activism and friends. And then I thought about you and our friendship and whether you were an exception. And I realize that actually you're the reason that in some ways I've pulled away from my dreams of friendships.

I say: when I first moved back to San Francisco, and you were on all those psych meds and drinking all the time and lying about everything and you couldn't deal with any critique, that's where I got this pattern of thinking about everything for months until I could talk about it without an emotional attachment I mean I could say the same thing I just didn't feel like I was about to die. I mean I did that for five years, and the same thing was true with Jeremy and that was around the same time but that was just nine months. With you it went on longer, and now I do the same thing with everyone and I want to ask you to help me to feel more secure.

As soon as I start talking, I notice that Derek pulls back, inside himself and he gets all tense. I guess I didn't expect that—I thought we could have this kind of conversation without tension—and I say that but he says: those are your issues and you need to deal with them. I say yes, those are my issues but they're about my relationship with you and there are two people in that relationship and I'm trying to involve you in my process instead of figuring everything out in my head, you always say that's what you want.

Then I say I feel ridiculous about this, because it happened so long ago, but I never really felt angry about it, and that's when Joanne died and I came back to San Francisco and I was staying with you and you were my support system and Alex and I had just started talking again since he didn't talk to me for over a year after we broke up and then we just randomly ran into one another and supposedly it was okay. And the three of us made plans to go to a bonfire in Corona Heights and I had to cancel at the last minute and you two went and I guess you were madly drawn to one another and had to have sex at that moment and then you ended up moving to Oregon together and leaving me and I didn't even want to be in San Francisco. This is where I start crying, but what really makes me sad is that Derek pulls further away, even moving his foot so that it isn't touching mine. What I want him to do when I cry is to hold me, that's always what I want. Instead I get that release but also distance I'm not looking for distance. This is when Derek says catharsis.

I say I'm talking about it now, because I didn't really feel angry at the time except right away—I decided that I liked seeing you together and then we ended up in a three-way relationship, or not a three-way relationship but I ended up facilitating your relationship like whenever something would go wrong you would both call me. And I know it's been ten years but I realize that it comes up in weird ways, so when you're talking about another relationship I feel annoyed and dismissive and I don't want to feel that way.

Derek says you need to let that go. I say I'm not interested in letting go, I'm trying to tell you how I'm feeling. Derek says why are you telling me all of this? I say I'm telling you because I don't want to hold these resentments inside and you've asked me to do that but then when I say something you can't deal. I say listen, mostly what I'm talking about is that five-year period when you couldn't deal with any kind of critique and you were always lying about everything and right when I first saw you on the psych meds I said they change your personality, they make you more manic and more depressed, and then when you were drinking you were always lying about everything and I said right away: why are you always lying about everything? But you couldn't deal at all—you would get enraged and then I would hold it all inside because I didn't want to lose you.

Derek says we've talked about this before and at that time I pulled away from everyone, I mean I thought about killing myself every day and I know I was not present in our relationship and if there's anything I can do to help you feel better just let me know. I say thank you, I can definitely think of some things, but in the past that's something you've said you didn't want me to do so I'm trying to give you the opportunity to participate. Derek says why are you trying to make me feel guilty? You should have pulled away; you should have taken care of yourself. I say I'm not trying to make you feel guilty. Derek says I just listened to you for ten minutes, and we've already talked about these things before, we've had two conversations about the same things. I have too much confrontation going on in my life right now and this is overwhelming.

Now he's angry and trying to hold it in, I'm angry and trying to let it out. I say do you want physical distance from me, I'm asking you because I don't. Derek says yes. I say I just wanted to make that clear, I think we can still have this conversation and hold one another and it doesn't have to be adversarial, but of course I'm going to respect your desire for distance.

I say you're right, we've had two conversations about some of the same things, but three conversations about a five-year period doesn't seem like a lot to me. Derek says maybe you're right, maybe we need to talk more, but I'm not feeling good about this, I'm not feeling good at all. I say I'm not feeling good either. Derek says I think I'm going to leave. I say do you want a hug? Derek says yes. We hug goodbye, and I feel some sort of sad resignation I'm not sure what's next.

I'm thinking about how, when we started talking, Derek said I feel really good about our relationship I feel like something shifted over the last six months and I feel closer to you I don't have much to say I feel really good.

I thought the hard part would be speaking, I thought my fears were irrational and really Derek would be supportive and listen and it would all be fine. He'd listen and then it would be okay. That's all I wanted. I always used to believe that talking made things better I mean that was something I learned with Derek something we learned a long time ago something I still believe. The truth is that Derek usually can't deal, I mean on my birthday all I said was: when you got all grumpy it shut me down. And he said: I wasn't grumpy, maybe I was a little bit annoyed. And I said OK, I couldn't deal when you got annoyed and it shut me down. And Derek said I thought I was doing a good job of not showing it. But never: I'm sorry I shut you down.

He wants me to say what I'm feeling in the moment, but when I say what I'm feeling in the moment he can't deal. Even when I said it annoys me when you look at your cell phone all the time while we're hanging out, he couldn't even deal with that. And then when I think about something for a while before bringing it up, he can't deal with that either.

But the worst thing he said was you should have pulled away, you should've taken care of yourself. He meant I should have dropped him as a friend, which wasn't what I wanted. If I'd pulled away for five years, we wouldn't still be friends—there's just no way. I mean it's never happened before. Derek probably wasn't thinking that, but I'm not sure.

Somewhere in the conversation I ask Derek what he wants from our relationship, I mean because it used to be us against the world and then when I first got back to San Francisco he said he didn't want that anymore and so I started thinking about finding different people for different needs, but I wonder about the other model we used to share, the model that you just get more and more vulnerable with someone and then when you're more vulnerable than you ever imagined you just keep revealing more and the relationship gets deeper. That's still my ideal relationship.

Derek says well I definitely don't want us against the world, and I say I don't necessarily want that either, but what about the other part, about vulnerability, because sometimes I think you don't want that either, I mean you definitely didn't want that seven years ago so I'm wondering what you want now. Derek says I don't know, and I say well why don't you think about it and get back to me. That's what I always say when Derek says he hasn't thought about something, or something is too much, but he never gets back to me. We only have these conversations when I initiate them. A year ago, which was our last conversation about the five-year period when Derek was all strung-out, and he asked what he could do to make me feel safer, I said I'd like it if you would check in and ask me how I feel about our relationship, so I don't have to be the one who brings it up all the time. He hasn't asked me once.

I wanted to ask how he sees himself in relationship to the world, because I think we used to see ourselves in similar ways I mean I know that's how we expressed it—the world was a horrible place and we were looking for people to hold onto, to feel like it was worth it. Worth it to go on, worth it to keep fighting, worth it to keep crafting ourselves into and out of delicate messes, worth it to challenge every aspect of ourselves, worth it to challenge every aspect of the world around us. I still see things in somewhat similar ways, I mean I have less hope for the idea of chosen family that was so important to us then, less hope because the people that were supposedly family have let me down so much and I start to believe what Benjamin said a while back: family is something so awful that it shouldn't be reclaimed.

But I do believe in challenging every aspect of ourselves, every aspect of the world around us, and building some kind of beauty and defiance in the ruins of ourselves and what we are trying to make. Even when I was talking to Derek about anger, I wasn't expressing my anger. I don't know if that's okay. I don't know what's okay.

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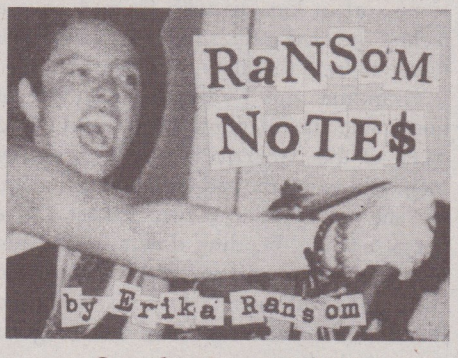
My new novel, *So Many Ways to Sleep Badly*, is out early!!!! I'll be touring October through December, so maybe we can meet up (check my homepage for dates). And, the expanded second edition of *That's Revolting! Queer Strategies for Resisting Assimilation* is also finally available. You can check in on me via my blog, nobodypasses.blogspot.com. These days I'm the reviews editor at the brilliant new feminist magazine *Make/shift*, where I also have a column but only twice a year (that's how often the magazine comes out). I live for feedback, so send me love letters and/or delicious threats via my new homepage, www.mattildabernsteinsycamore. com, which includes past *MRR* columns. Or you can write to me at 537 Jones Street, #3152, San Francisco, CA 94102.



Saturday, August 1, 2008

Riding my cheap mountain bike through the Tennessee countryside, miles away from the nearest town, clicking through the gears. I pass the occasional mailbox, a rectangular black metal box on a wooden post, standing sentinel where the gravel driveway meets the road. As the tires hummed and I cruised down the smooth black asphalt, I passed a wood and wire fence lined by low wild bushes. A black horse on the other side shied away from me, bucked and ran across the field. A few moments later I slowed as I saw two calves, already bigger than me, easily weighing over a hundred pounds, standing by the side of the road. They had somehow gotten through the fence surrounding the herd, and were trying to get back to their mothers, but the wire was now in their way and they began to panic. The cows saw me coming and their eyes went wide, white showing at the edges, and the big black cows on the other side of the broken fence mooed at me in warning, loud and yelling, the calves began to run and I was afraid they would charge into the street. But they didn't, and I went on, hoping they would find their way back. I was used to dodging buses, not cows.

Everything was sweating, even the grass and trees, in the intense heat and humidity of the day. The sun was directly overhead; it was just past noon. It had been topping nearly 100 degrees this week, and I could feel a difference in temperature as a cloud passed in front of the sun, the faintest feeling of a cool breeze. Sweat dripped into my eyes and began to trickle down my back. But I felt good, a wide smile swept across my face. My legs pushed forward, I breathed hard and slowly tackled a hill. At the top an abandoned grain silo overlooked the surrounding fields like the ruins of a castle, its metal and concrete sides covered by climbing vines. I imagined the old, crumbling country house next to it was transformed into a squat, and there were fantastic shows in the unused barn. I imagined growing vegetables in the back of the house and how we could get away with it all.

The scenery begins to melt, reality rearranges itself and the days slip into past, future, present, unknown, ambiguous. I don't have much time here. I vaporize and disappear. Soon I will wake up and find myself on another voyage, following guideposts from the stars. Fuck. What does that mean?

I am packing up again, assembling my life into bags, off to Europe in a few days. Following my heart and moving for love, following a sense of adventure, a belief that everything will work out somehow. I've developed a good gut feeling for these things, like a sailor tasting the salt and direction of the wind, guessing the size and strength of a storm ahead. I have a strong sense I'm moving in the right direction, following the current of life beneath me. Hell fuckin' yeah.

But here, at this very moment, my head is fragmenting again. I keep the memories of my childhood at the edge of a sharp stick, holding off for just a few more days before I go. Why am I here, besides a cheap place to crash between catching rides in vans? Why am I so far away from my friends? *Why the fuck* have I spent the last month in a small southern town living with my mom?

One reason I've been here is Rebecca, my grandmother, who turns 95 tomorrow. She lives in an "assisted living center"—sort of a nursing home, but a little nicer I suppose, but still, she calls it "The Institution" and I imagine its not all that chipper. My grand-

ma is almost totally blind now, but her mind is still sharp, and she has a hard time finding people who live at the home she can talk with. She finds it depressing that most of the people living there are so out of it, even though they are younger than she is. I used to read the names from the obituary page in the *Daily News Journal* to her, but now she rarely even asks anymore. Just about every friend she had has died. What must it be like, to outlive all your friends, and your husband of almost seventy years?

Twice a week I go and visit grandma, and we sit on her old couch, beneath the gaze of a photo my grandfather, who died three years ago. She talks about the Presidential election and why global warming doesn't exist, and wonders what I'm doing next. She says I should go back to school. She doesn't understand my life, but I don't mind. I told her why punk was important to me, and tried to explain all the things I've learned along the way, the great friends I've made and how it has let me travel, and inspired me to do things for myself, DIY. She doesn't like it that I'm moving so far away. And everyone knows that nationalized healthcare doesn't work, so I'll have to come back to the US to see a doctor, anyway. It doesn't do any good to argue with her, so I just change the subject.

I ask her about her life during the war, living with her two young kids and her uncle while granddad was away for two years in England and France, at the end helping to organize all the supplies needed for D-Day. I ask grandma about her childhood, growing up on a farm, before electricity was put in houses, and people still rode horses instead of driving cars. Her father died from diabetes when she was four, and her mother died of cancer when she was 20. Her brother died before she was born, when he was only two, from diarrhea, because back then there wasn't a cure. After her mom died, Rebecca took what money was left from the family and went to college on her own, something not many women did back then. That's where she met granddad. One day, when Phil was visiting, we all went for a drive with grandma and saw the little house where she and granddad first lived, before he was drafted and they started living on army bases around the country.

I like listening to grandma's stories, even the ones I've heard a thousand times, and then finding out something I didn't know before. I learned my grandfather's sisters were musicians, one was a singer, and the other played the piano. My great grandfather became a lawyer, and was able to get a good job, but then realized he didn't like living in the city, and he didn't like working in an office. It didn't suit him, so the story goes, and I don't blame him. He took what he had saved and moved back to the hilly countryside where he grew up, a tiny town near the North Carolina border. He bought a piece of land, farmed, was involved with the community and wrote poems. He described the beauty of the Tennessee hills and observations on life. People must have liked his poems, as he became known as the "Poet Laureate of Cocke County." Not bad for a recovering lawyer.

Another relative, living in the hills of east Tennessee during the 1860s, was shot in the back while trying to escape Confederate soldiers, because he refused to be drafted. He was a war-resister, way back then. My grandma's uncle Will traveled all over the US by train in the '30s and '40s as a shoe salesman, "even to Alaska," as he loved being on the road. I like knowing about these people, wondering if it's in my DNA to love music, writing, traveling. I feel some sort of kinship with them. I have a feeling they led interesting lives, or at least weren't afraid to follow their hearts.

Grandma and I talk for a couple of hours, and she offers me a soda, and I read some of the paper to her, and check her mail, and when the cafeteria opens for dinner she walks me to the front door. I give her a big hug, bending down around her tiny frail frame, and say, "I love you" and she smiles and says, "I love you too" and thanks me for visiting. Yeah, that's a good reason to be here.

End Notes

I'm off to Spain! More notes from the other side. Solidarity and blazing guitars, Erika.

Everything Turns Gray...

...Except for the singer for Agent Orange's hair. Do you think he dyes it? He must be getting on a bit. Agent Orange was my favorite band for a while. They were among the first American punk bands I was exposed to, thanks to their skate-rock credentials. I had a skater friend called Campbell who subscribed to *Thrasher* and had an auntie that lived in America and would send him records and tapes of bands he read about in the "Pus Zone." Thanks to this relative, Campbell was also one of the few people I knew who wore actual Vans shoes, not just the copy ones that only cost a fiver from the cheap shop and fell apart after one attempted ollie.

I'd lie on my bunk bed with the rain battering the window, blasting my Agent Orange tapes and reading Campbell's old *Thrasher*s or well-thumbed copies of *Freestylin'* (the BMX magazine that Spike Jonze worked on before becoming a famous film and music video director). Agent Orange's beach-baked surf-punk sound promised the perfect, endless bitchin' summer that I was sure existed on the other side of the world. Sunset pool carving sessions with the Bones Brigade, Miami hoppers on Venice Beach with Woody Itson and Martin Aparijo, or airing out of the huge bowl at Pipeline Skatepark with Eddie Fiola and Brian Blyther. Agent Orange were my imagined soundtrack for all my teenage California dreams, as well as appearing on the soundtrack of many '80s bike and skate videos. They were also my introduction to surf music, leading me to seek out such surf classics as Dick Dale's version of "Miserlou" long before it became a dorm-room staple thanks to the *Pulp Fiction* soundtrack.

Agent Orange released two albums in the '80s, several years apart and sounding quite different, trading in the buzzing SoCal punk sound of *Living In Darkness* (Posh Boy) for a glossier '80s pop sheen on *This Is the Voice*. When I first heard that album I thought it sounded like U2. It grew on me though and wimpy as it is, some of those songs are still favorites to this day. After that they seemed to disappear and I suppose I forgot about them. Their albums were squeezed onto the shelf and only occasionally got pulled out for nostalgia's sake.

When I moved to America I didn't meet many people who had shared my childhood love for Agent Orange. I got the impression they were considered a joke amongst too-cool-for-school hardcore hipsters. Admittedly, the early '90s was a time of us-vs-them, and admitting to enjoying a band with such brazen pop sensibilities could be considered a crime on a par with enjoying Green Day's major-label output. From time to time I'd see ads for Agent Orange shows in or around San Francisco, usually in weird venues that punk bands never usually played. I'd heard that it was just Mike Palm (singer/guitarist) and a couple of hired guns. People who *had* caught

this later incarnation of the band hadn't exactly given them rave reviews. That, coupled with my reticence for reunion tours and nostalgia, prevented me from ever going to see them, although I always had a little voice in the back of my head telling me that I ought to at least get to see this band, my one-time favorite, at least once in my life.

So, a couple of weeks ago, Agent Orange was playing at the Uptown in Oakland, about five minutes from where I live, on a Saturday night. There was pretty much no excuse for not finally taking the plunge and seeing them.

The wife and I got to the Uptown (an unremarkable but decent-sounding black box of a rock club) too late to catch the opening band but in time to catch local streetpunx The Sore Thumbs. They were great, if somewhat derivative; some good guitar playing and catchy melodies. They played for too long for an opening band though. It seriously felt like an hour. I was a little bit confused by the crowd. Looking around at the amassed handful of skater bros, Burning Man hacky-sack types, and Hot Topic punk chicks, I felt like I was at a midweek bar show in a Northern California hick town, not seeing a legendary American punk band in a major metropolitan area.

Agent Orange took the stage and performed to a half-empty venue. I felt a pang of sympathy for Mike Palm that at this point in his career, after being a major part of one of the most influential scenes in American music, he can't fill a small venue in the San Francisco Bay Area. He didn't seem to care though; the band sound-checked with surf instrumental "Mr. Moto" then launched straight into the classic "Everything Turns Gray", and from there ploughed through a swathe of greatest hits from both albums, their EPs, and pre-*Darkness* demos, as well as a couple of tracks from their (unknown to me) '90s self-released CD. Every song was tighter and faster than on record (sometimes to their slight detriment, especially on some of the poppier stuff from *This Is the Voice*, which could have benefited with a softer touch). The bass player bobbed up and down energetically like a Muppet the entire time, but was pretty harmless, except for screwing up the intro to *Living in Darkness*, which is the one time the bass has to take a really prominent role. The drummer stole the show though. Mike Palm is unquestionably the captain of the ship but the drummer was at the rudder that night. For all that it was small and somewhat unusual, the audience met the band's energy with boundless enthusiasm. The "pit" was made up of computer-programmer types in Birkenstocks and glasses.

At their core, Agent Orange is a solid, tight live act with a repertoire bursting with timeless, classic punk tunes. So where were all the punks? I think Agent Orange just isn't cool enough for some people. I admit, the on-stage banter verged on the corny. I think that if the band had broken up just after *Living In Darkness*, or maybe even before releasing it, and then got back together right now for a reunion tour, punk scenesters would be wetting themselves at the thought of seeing them. They could have broken up after appearing on the *Rodney on the Roq* compilation, and they might have become another Middle Class or Rhino 39: ghostly touchstones that had faded into punk lore only to be resurrected by a future generation of hardcore historians.

So instead of stoking the loins of eBay-scouring message-board punk enthusiasts, with their sophisticated palates refined by copious obscure KBD rarities, Agent Orange play the Warped Tour or half-empty places like the Uptown, serving up '80s nostalgia to knock-kneed ageing skaters and a dose of what poppy punk could have sounded like before all those NOFX clones got hold of it to neophyte mall-punks. I'm not sure who's missing out more.

I'm not trying to make a case for Agent Orange's relevance in 2008. 90% of *MRR*'s readership will think I'm lame for liking them or for writing this column about them, but too bad. I may never see them again, but I'm glad I went to see them this once, and that it wasn't a total bummer. Now that little voice in the back of my head has finally been appeased.

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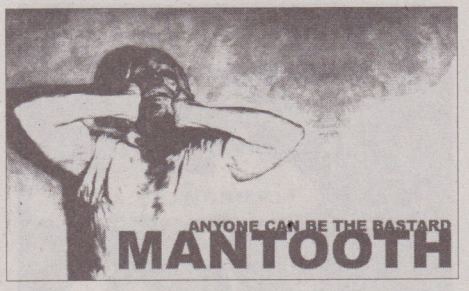
'80s Agent Orange skate decks can be sent c/o PO Box 22971, Oakland, CA 94609. www.allanmcnaughton.com



My Co-Workers Are Timing My Shit-Breaks

The other month I wrote about the magic of chef coats and the mysterious powers they enchant their owners with. Maybe I didn't mention this, but chef coats form a symbiotic relationship with their hosts. This relationship can be both beneficial and detrimental to one's health, but please do not tell people that I said this is anything you might have seen in what we will refer to as "*Spaderman*" movies. A little while back I got into some legal trouble for some things I wrote about Agathocles. I guess there are some people out there quick to put the long arm of the law at lowly columnist for even MENTIONING so-and-so without their expressed permission. So please, do not think that I am referencing any famous movies or people or mincecore bands.

Anyhow, I mentioned that I no longer work in a restaurant, trading that bottomless pit of depression for a slightly different bottomless pit of depression. The nature of my work in this dank pit of fluorescence will remain top secret. If memory serves me correctly, I think I said something about what I do in the above-mentioned column. Unfortunately for you, I am a lazy shit-sack, unwilling and unmotivated to check my own facts. It should have been clear to you by this point that you shouldn't trust anything that I say in this column. If you've been going through your damn life thinking that everything I write here is good and true then quite frankly you deserve those suicidal feelings welling up from within. Yes, everything I've taught you has been a malicious lie. I am like that leader from the "evil" dojo in *Karate Kid*. I mean…*Kungfu Kid* (please do not sue me). Akin to unscrupulous acts of martial arts, I deal strictly in printing wildly implausible and idiotic bullshit in hopes that 1% of MRR readership will fall for my dumbassery. This would culminate in me amassing a huge army of dullards so that I may conquer the scene and then perhaps *The World*.

Anywho, I work in an office right now. Isn't that so fucking funny? People are so quirky here and they do and say the craziest things! Have you ever read the comic strip *Dilbert*? It's exactly like that. Have you ever seen *The Office*? It is also exactly like that, but with a smart-ass dog and a dude with a funny little tie!

In case you are not aware of the funny pop-culture things I am referencing above, allow me to describe working in an office in a little more detail. Every day you show up to this big stupid building that is full of big stupid people. It's kind of like going to church. You sit there for what feels like eternity while this vague sense of itchiness slowly spreads over your entire body.

Furthermore, you are forced to wear this

ridiculous costume. In lieu of the paper pants with the elastic waistband that you are used to, *they* require you to don these things they call "slacks." They are like handcuffs made of fabric. Poly-cotton shackles (I call them "slackles" to be clever) handed down from some faceless oppressor, THE MAN. Ever instance of your fucking day is spent trying to subtly remove yourself from this garment prison, but you can't because you know everyone in this "office" is watching your every move, timing your bathroom breaks and inspecting the contents of your bowel movements when you let your guard down.

You never speak to anyone here but it's like you've known these people all your life. That guy over there—he tucks his shirt into his underpants. You fucking know it. You just know it. And that girl over there? She thinks that Ron Paul is going to decide whether or not she goes to heaven or hell when she dies. In addition, she believes that humans and dinosaurs walked the earth together and that the reason why the dinosaurs went extinct is because of gay dinosaur marriage and dinosaur abortion. You see, they forgot the line "Under God" in the pledge of dino-allegiance.

The guy in cube #34909888 desperately wishes his father was still alive so that he could kill him all over again. And the swarthy chap who constantly sits with his hands under his butt? I know this might sound racist, but fuck that asshole.

I'm not exactly sure what people know about me. To throw them off my trail, I pretend that I'm on dialysis and that I'm a southern gentleman. My pretend accent is pretty terrible, so I'm banking on the fact that most of these people were hired through a special government program design to provide lobotomized half-apes jobs in the office world. I generally waddle about the office dabbing my sweaty temples with a fancy handkerchief (note: a remnant from the year 2000 "thrash" boom) muttering, "oh my stars, it's so hot in here! I could sure use a tall glass of sweet tea and perhaps a vegemite sandwich" (Australia is in the *southern* hemisphere—read a fucking book before you send me your emails telling me I'm a buffoon or something).

Someone fucking snitched on me recently and told everyone that I am in a band. Now they all think that I'm singing for the office rock band even though I've never been to a practice, let alone talk with them long enough to tell them that "Soundgarden" was already a band. I'm just hoping "Tom" has enough sense in his damn head to take down their Myspace page: www.myspace.com/soundgarden. On the page they list me as "throat" and that I was in Warzone Womyn, Slices, and Agathocles. I just want us all to be clear here that I was only in Agathocles for like ten seconds before they realized I could not keep up with their mincing and was kicked to the mincecurb. That's what they told me, but I have a sneaking suspicion that it had something to do with my decorative sword collection and my subsequent obsession with Highlander. I know this might sound racist, but fuck that elitist shit.

Just like any other place on earth, the worst part about it is the constant posing going on. All these posers are still stuck on the '82 hardcore revival thing and think that everything Fucked Up squeezes out of their pompous asses is pure gold. No one around here seems to notice that we (the scene) have all moved onto rehashed early '90s garage rock/new wave/no wave. I mean, correct me if I'm wrong, but we're all supposed to have accounts on the Terminal Boredom message board nowadays, right? At 26+ years of age, where else are we to peddle our solo Monomen cover band that we recorded in our mom's living room?

But what do I know? This could be fucking heaven on earth. Years from now when I'm being bussed alongside 100 other of my octogenarian peers for a concert in the park featuring a hologram Soundgarden band before being shipped off to the soylent green plant, I'm sure I'll be happy to hear with anything that isn't the sound of my own oxygen tank wheezing and hissing. I also look forward to having liver-spots and no recollection of that time I was in Agathocles.

Endnotes:

This is my 50th column for *MRR*. Congratulate me on my momentous achievement: gregory.mantooth@gmail.com

Over the last few years I wrote in this column about how rising energy prices would affect the punk scene as well as society as a whole. As many had predicted, those prices have started to rise and probably won't be coming back down. A lot of issues about energy and sustainability I've written about in the past are moving from the fringe to the mainstream. This process did happen before during the '70s energy crisis, and then the issues receded from view. This time, however, the energy crisis is here to stay. I will probably write more on these issues in the future, but maybe not as much as in the past, since they are getting a lot of attention even from the mainstream press.

I have been running my truck on biodiesel for a little over a year now. I don't feel the need to write a whole column about biodiesel as I presume most people are conversant with the topic by now. I would like to point out to bands touring with a diesel-powered vehicle that you can check out www.biotrucker.org for a list of truck stops and gas stations around the country that sell biodiesel. They also have an 800 number you can call to find stations.

I'm writing this in late July. Every year around this time most labels and distros experience a slowdown. Typically there's another slow period in March. This year and last I wondered aloud if the DIY hardcore scene was entering a slow period or a slump that it would never exit. More and more people seem to be arriving at a conclusion similar to this. Over the last 20 years or so, labels and distributors have come and gone, rising and falling with each wave of new bands and styles. It seems, however, that of late fewer new distributors or labels are coming up, while many old ones are checking out. Often these labels have long outlived their relevance. But I can tell you that behind the scenes a lot of labels and distributors have been cutting back, slowing down, and getting pretty close to throwing in the towel. I talked in the past about how there was an over abundance of bands and labels "cutting a small pie into smaller pieces" and I feel that now we are seeing the end result of those trends. More labels and distributors will fold in the coming year or two. It's up to the reader to decide if this is a "correction" weeding out the weak and sloppy, or the collapse of DIY hardcore as we know it.

When companies fold, they tend to blame external circumstances. Big businesses often blame high taxes and labor costs for forcing them under, when in truth their products are outdated or uncompetitive. There is an old adage that if you build a better mousetrap, the world will beat a path to your door. If you have a record that

people really want, they will stop at nothing to get copies. But if you are putting out derivative or poorly produced records, you will find that not too many people are buying and you will even have a hard time trading them for similarly lower tier records. While the economy, downloading and rising postage costs have all taken their toll on DIY hardcore, the fact remains that if there are great bands, making great records, people will want to hear those songs and buy those records. The answer isn't necessarily in lower costs, better packaging, or better distribution; it's in higher quality content that people will want to seek out.

A lot of failing stores, labels, and distributors have blamed their ills on downloading and file sharing. While I don't disagree with this analysis I do feel it's something of a cop out. New formats have been coming in and out for many years, and if you can't adapt to a new format change, you are bound to suffer. CD sales are way down across the board. But we all know that CD was a pretty weak format to begin with. I don't know many people who are passionate about CD collecting the way *many* people are about vinyl collecting. Indeed I have long predicted CD's future to be something like that of a cassette tape or 8-track. A novel format with a few die-hards but something that has had its day in the sun and been replaced by a newer format. That newer format is of course digital music and I think we can all agree now that it's here to stay. Stores and labels who lambaste fans for "stealing" music by file sharing are re-fighting the battles of 2003 and should just accept that we are not going back and that very few people in the punk scene are ever going to pay for downloads the way the industry would like them too. You may or may not agree with the way things have turned out, but I doubt at this point anyone is going to be swayed by the moral argument that downloading is "stealing" music.

In the Punk Journalism department I would like to salute the editors of *Razorcake* for delivering quality content month after month. I don't care for or even know most of the bands covered, and my attention span is too short for a lot of the columns. However, the interviews, especially with the first and second generation punk and hardcore bands and personalities from LA are always excellent and even if you are totally disinterested in current punk music it's worth buying every issue.

My life has become just a little bit more complete with the publication of *Encyclopedia of Swedish Punk 1977-87* by Peter Jandreus. This is a nicely put together (in English) 300-odd page discography of early Swedish punk and hardcore with color photos of all the record sleeves as well as many amusing anecdotes about the bands. There has been talk of compiling a book like this for many years and Sweden remained the only major punk country without a comprehensive discography for the heroic era of hardcore and punk. Overall it's one of the best written, assembled and edited books of its kind, *The Encyclopedia of Swedish Punk* is chock full of information. I recommend it most highly for anyone who is into Swedish punk and hardcore. If you are a truly passionate collector and fan of the music like me, this book will probably add some hitherto unknown items to your want list. On the down side, the 21st century is an era where access to once secret knowledge has made many things a lot harder than they used to be. That is to say, that for those of us still trying to track down the Vicious Visions 7", there are now probably going to be ten times as many people adding it to their own want lists and driving scarcity and prices even higher. This book takes its place on your bookshelf next to *Svensk Punk 77-81*, which included a lot of info about seminal bands and scenes, but not much about records aside from some photo collages of classic records. And it makes a great companion to the essential *Suomi Punk 1977-1998* by Jarkko Kuivanen. The latter could use a re-press and would be great if it contained more photos and information on the bands like the *Encyclopedia of Swedish Punk* does. That said, my copy is dog eared and has notes and highlights throughout and has rarely left my desk for several years. A volume about the hardcore/punk records of Norway and Denmark would be a great addition to these two works.

A SMALL ACT OF REBELLION

The summer of '84 was the classic mixed bag. I was working in the loan department of Century North Shore Bank in Lynn, basically posting loan payments, doing credit rating searches and the like. I don't even remember what else because I've tried to block it out of my mind. This was in the days before everything got computerized, though if memory serves me correctly we did have a primitive computer system to run the credit checks. As I said, I've tried to block it out. I do remember some perks, though. When I opened the payments in the morning, there would often be un-cancelled stamps, which I'd grab for my pen-pal correspondence. Also, we had a copy machine that I'd use to make flyers for trading with these same pen-pals.

There were five of us in this windowless basement office. Three women and two guys—yours truly and the loan officer Harry, who was also a VP. He was the classic middle-aged banker. Bespectacled, balding, a bit paunchy, and definitely not the friendliest guy in the world. And he was a heavy smoker, as was Sandy, another co-worker. That made it really pleasant, going home each day reeking of smoke. I had been "promoted" to that department a while back after mastering the task of tellering. This was a miserable work experience and I also managed to fuck things up really badly. One of the jobs was credit card reconciliation, handled by a sardonic but very nice woman named Dot. Well, she was mildly sardonic. Dot was going on vacation and they needed someone to do that job while she was away. So I got "volunteered" to do the credit card work. A lady from the main office came in and gave me what amounted to a short (not even an hour, probably) crash course in how to do this task.

This was hardly enough preparation and I botched it but good. It took them two months to straighten out the mess I made. It nearly cost me my job. In fact, it ended up getting me ejected from the department back to the teller line. I had a meeting in the conference/lunchroom with Harry that amounted to him telling me how badly I'd fucked up and how things weren't working out in general. He said that Sandy, who was ostensibly another supervisor to me, hadn't been pleased with my work, either. Then he said something that completely floored me. I'm not making this up. He expressed disappointment in my failings because I was a guy and, in his view, guys can do the job better than girls. I don't remember what my reaction was to that statement, if I even had one. And it was a ludicrous statement, independent of its troglodyte nature. The fact was Sandy, even though she turned out to be a backstabbing piece of shit, also ran that department and Harry would have been com-

pletely screwed without her. Or Dot. Or Debbie, a sweet woman originally from Greece who worked with us.

So there I was, getting a less-than-favorable review and my choices boiled down to getting fired or demoted back to teller. I took the latter because it wasn't quite as miserable a job and I eventually got moved to the Salem branch, which was much more pleasant, even with some of the smoking that went on in that branch. I'd done a stint in that branch before and found it more to my liking. Still, I wish there'd been smoke-free workplaces back then. At least we had windows and the VP in that branch was the former mayor of Salem. He basically sat in his office and smoked all day, greeting visitors and apparently didn't drum up as much business as the bank would have liked because he eventually got sacked. Nice guy, though, and he didn't give me a hard time. Diane, the manager, was very good at her job and I always wondered why she was never promoted. Glass ceiling, perhaps? Maybe Harry's mentality towards female workers was a part of the corporate fabric.

The only other thing (besides the smoking) that sucked in that branch was the soft rock that played over the PA the entire day. To this day, if I hear a Carpenters song, it creates a violent reaction. For a time, they played an oldies/classic rock station which was more tolerable but apparently ruled too jarring. I'd worked at this branch earlier in my tenure and it was top 40 music at that point—I don't ever need to hear Bowie's "Let's Dance" nor Naked Eyes' "Always Something There to Remind Me" again either. Still better than the Carpenters, I guess.

I had a vacation at the end of July/early August and it was a welcome opportunity to clear my head. It was a nice time off. I got to see Raw Power play in Boston and again in Easthampton, MA, out in the western part of the state (home of Deep Wound!) and my band No System had the honor of opening for them at the latter show. Not only that, but their bass-player borrowed my crappy 40 watt Peavey amp and I can guarantee you it was the best bass-playing ever to go through it. It was No System's first show as a three-piece, with yours truly on bass/vocals and, despite the fact I managed to blow out my vocal chords and could only whisper the next few days, it was one of our better shows and we got a good response. Raw Power killed it, of course—still one of the most powerful hardcore bands I've ever seen.

I also got completely obsessed with Hüsker Dü's Zen Arcade double LP over that vacation, playing it nearly every day. I'd seen the Hüskers play three nights in a row the previous month, in Providence, Boston and this same venue in Easthampton and then managed to drag my sorry ass into work each morning after. Zen Arcade was something of a "concept" album, basically telling the story of a kid who felt rejected by his family and sets off to find his place in the world or something like that. That sense of rejection is summed up on "Whatever": "Mom and Dad, I'm sorry / Mom and Dad, don't worry / I'm not the son you wanted but what could you expect? / I've made my world of happiness to combat your neglect." Goddamn did that ever hit home. There was another song called "Indecision Time" and that also struck a personal chord because I was trying to figure out what the future would hold. I had a feeling it wouldn't be in the bank but where? And, of course, hardcore was corrupting my way of thinking, this whole questioning stuff, rebelling, etc. I was 24 and definitely at a crossroads and my parents certainly weren't happy with my unwillingness to just shut up and take it. I'm not sure if they were guilty of "neglect," since material wants were provided for when I was growing up. But there seemed to be a great deal emotional neglect or, more accurately, abuse. A side note on Zen Arcade—this album is incredible and if you want to hear some of the most over-the-top hardcore punk this band ever did, check out side two from "Beyond the Threshold" through "Masochism World." You'll be floored by the unhinged qualities of those songs. Some younger people I know think Warehouse is the superior double LP by the Hüskers and I just shake my head in disbelief and wonder what's wrong with these people.

So what was the rebellion? As the title insinuates, it was a small act. I got my ear pierced. That was it. The year before, I'd gotten a buzz cut to look more "hardcore" and this seemed to be the next step. When I went to visit my folks after that haircut, my dad's first words were, "you look like the devil!" I'd gotten my ear pierced before, earlier in the year. I got it done on a Friday but, by Monday, I removed it because I was afraid of being reprimanded at work. Yep, I was that timid and it took me that long to even consider doing something like that. A few times after that, I'd jam the "starter" earring back into the lobe on the weekend, only to remove it Monday and it got rather irritated. Finally, at the start of that July vacation, I did it for keeps. I kept it in when going back to work and guess what? The world didn't stop. In fact, some of the ladies I worked with thought it was pretty cool. It was a very small way to express a modicum of individuality, of rebellion, dammit! Codifying my allegiance to punk rock. To me, getting my ear pierced was kind of a big deal. I know it seems silly but keep in mind I was pretty far behind on the maturity timetable. Like eight years or so...

I then let my hair start to grow back and it didn't look too great for awhile as it grew in. I also wore a green army-style jacket to work (which I'd remove when I arrived). One day, Bob, the bank president (we were all on a first name basis with him) said that if I wanted to wear an earring, then that was my prerogative. Same for growing my hair back and wearing the jacket but insinuated I didn't have much of a future at the bank if that was the way I was going to present myself.

I knew I didn't have a future, that I didn't belong there, despite the fact I was on the verge of being promoted to head teller in early '85, just around the time I decided to quit. Another act of rebellion, in that I didn't have another job lined up and wasn't going to move back home. Not that my folks would have let me, anyway, and it was probably a good idea not to. What was a good idea was to take some time off and it enabled me to travel to San Francisco for the first time (including an appearance on MRR radio!). I delivered phone books to bring in some cash. I also had a momentary loss of sanity where I decided to go back to the bank about four months after leaving and gave notice after three days. So much for a good reference.

As I said, getting my ear pierced may seem to be a very small act of rebellion but it seemed like an important step. And when I interviewed for my next job, at a record store, I was wearing a dangling earring and an Articles Of Faith shirt and got the job because of my qualifications, i.e. being a complete music nerd. It was a perfect fit and a place where I could be myself and not hide behind the facade of a shirt and tie.

One bit of shameless promotion before moving on. I mentioned No System above. No Way Records is going to be releasing a 7" of a No System demo recorded in 1985. Only 100 tapes were made back then and this will be a one-time pressing of 1000 copies. It was something of a "scab" lineup on the demo and I don't have time to detail it here but if you want the inside scoop, go

to www.myspace.com/nosystemhc.

MORE REBELLIOUS SOUNDS

I begin with another generous pile of records on No Way Records (www.nowayrecords.com), a mark of hardcore quality at this point. First on the list is the long overdue vinyl repress of UNSEEN FORCE's 1986 album In Search Of the Truth, the CD version of which was reviewed in this space not too long ago. In this case, owning the CD isn't necessarily a bad thing since it also included a live set and demos from 2000 Maniacs, a predecessor to Unseen Force. To recap a bit, this remains an underappreciated album from that time. It's a stinging, scrappy hardcore sound with a whiff of metal guitar. In retrospect, they could be seen as East Coast brethren (and sistren, since they had a female bass player) to CHRIST ON PARADE. If hardcore was dead or dying by '86, as reported by certain clueless authors, no one told Unseen Force.

The other new 12" on No Way is from CHRONIC SEIZURE. Ancient World is slightly more "produced" when compared to the previous EPs but it's still a full-bore trebly attack. The opening chords strike, it sounds like the Dead Boys' "Ain't Nothin' to Do" but the speed burst comes in and it's quickly apparent that this band's anarchic spirit is from a pure hardcore punk muse. There's also more variety in tempo than in the past, not always relying on the brute speed—"Disaffected" is an out and out pounder, for instance. Vocals spat out with agitated urgency, both from Austin and bass-player Pat, who logged time as the Rat Bastards' frontman. With titles like the previously-mentioned "Disaffected", "Stark Reality", and "Slow Death in the City", it's not too difficult to figure out where these guys are coming from message-wise, if that's the term.

The rest of the No Way stuff is in the 7" format. CITIZENS PATROL keeps it simple for Dead Children Pure mania (where have I heard that before?), with a razor-edge rasp in the voice (Kenny could be Blaine FARTZ's baby brother) and thumping songs that move like a motherfucker to the point where your head's still moving even after the last chord has burst from the speaker. I'd say they're not too enamored with day to day life, given the words for "I Want to Be Boring" and "Life on Repeat." I'm definitely enamored with Citizens Patrol's musical nailbomb.

LIFE TRAP has the same sort of attitude towards day to day life on their second EP, Solitary Confinement. Music/lyrics for the new recession, at least on "Too Young to Die," a lamentation about being unable to afford life's necessities. These youngsters continue to prove themselves adept at the hard 'n' fast style and there are some shit-hot guitar and bass lines. And if you think it sounds a bit like Direct Control, you wouldn't be mistaken—Nico sounds like Brandon from DC with a sore throat.

REPROBATES could be the descendents of Jerry's Kids and Gang Green—it has that kind of feel. Their Stress EP is a slammingly chaotic charge of raw hardcore punk—it sounds as though everything going to come flying apart—a din of guitar, bass, and drums that somehow manage to make a cogent attack out of this seeming mess. The buildup for "Failure" creates an ominous foreshadowing that something unhinged is on the way and that's exactly what happens.

I've always found WARKRIME's semi-spastic take on hardcore to be somewhat disjointed and that continues to be the case for Tighten Up. I imagine it's a change from the standard verse/chorus/verse setting that many hardcore bands follow, a case of defying the convention a bit. There's some early Void and COC in the buildups and guitar damage, along with the ranting vocals. And, somewhere, Arthur Lee will roll over in his grave if he hears their cover of Love's "7 and 7 Is." Maybe he'll be grooving on it—they do batter it up pretty well. The idea to create something that goes against the grain is intriguing and there are moments where everything does fall into place; I just wish the execution was more consistent.

Next on the agenda come three new corkers from Finnish label Kämäset Levyt (Valliktu 28 A 2, 33240 Tampere, FINLAND, www.punkfinland.net/kamanen). Ah, the magic three letters at the head of DISKELMA's moniker. I wonder what they sound like? Actually, their Fun Is Over LP it's not a pure tribute although there's definitely an element of that in there. Shredding hardcore imbued with an abundance of speed, red-hot riffs and leads and the words expelled with the requisite agitation. Blending some metallic guitar flourishes into the burning rampage. And a formidable rampage it is—this is searing fodder.

I like the overall sound on the new VIIMEINEN KOLONNÁ EP, Tuhat Aurinkoa more than previous releases. It's a raw, hammering approach that brings the band's power out in bolder relief. Yep, this is Dis-worship but, man, if they don't have it nailed. There are sick bass runs to accompany the guitar chord inferno, pounding drums and from-the-gut vocals. And reading the translation for "Tuhat Aurinkoa," which means "People Are Ugly" makes me smile. So does everything else here.

SOTATILA'S Eepee EP provides more Scandinavian perfection—a Finnish band favoring blistering tempos, dead-on instrumentation and harsh vocals with the accent on the last syllable (lots of "ahrrrs"). Once again, I could spend all day analyzing the various nuances, micro-influences but it's hard to analyze anything when being hammered with SOTATILA's tumult. Honoring the tradition but it's also a modern sound, particularly production-wise. In other words, no "distort" but it fucking blazes. Yep, there's an aura of familiarity here with no surprises—everything just falling perfectly into sync.

BASTARD SONS OF APOCALYPSE's 12" Strangled by the System (Adelante/Todo Destruido, adelantediscos gmail.com or www.my space.com/tododestruido) is absolutely killer, essential, ripping and every other adjective you want to attach. After a few EPs, this lives up to the promise on those records. These boys lay down ferocious Discharge-meets-Poison Idea mania. I don't know if it's a D-beat in the strict sense and I don't give a fuck; all I care about is shred-a-bility and BSA definitely possess that quality. The galloping drumming is what really keeps things moving here, and the occasional lead guitar break always happens at the right moment. BSA does allude to their musical approach in "No Charge D-Beat RocknRoll." Amidst a not-so-cheery worldview, that's the sole moment of lyrical levity here, a celebration of "kids playing with no future." Crank it, motherfuckers and get a move on 'cause there's only 525 of these PVC slabs.

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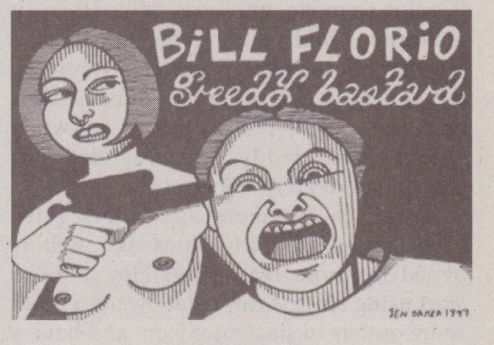
Al Quint, PO Box 2746, Lynn, MA 01903. Email: suburbanvoice@earthlink.net Sonic Overload radio: http://sonicoverload.moo cowrecords. com



The Coming Economic Doom

I'm definitely not the only person looking forward to the real recession coming

our way. A couple of years ago someone mentioned to me that he thought having a horrible ultra-conservative president should inspire really good punk rock bands to happen, but it didn't. The truth is, it's not the leadership but rather inflation, bankruptcy, and repo men that stir up the pot and make good times happen in our music scene. My favorite bands seem to come from the early to mid-'80s and the early '90s. This is where folks like to say it was Reagan and Bush that inspired all that angst and energy, but the truth is, in the late '80s there was an economic upturn and the music got suddenly worse. Reagan and Bush went nowhere, but bands like SLAPSHOT, BOLD, GORILLA BISCUITS, and NAUSEA suddenly got popular, not to mention the early '80s bands putting our some of the uninspired records of all time.

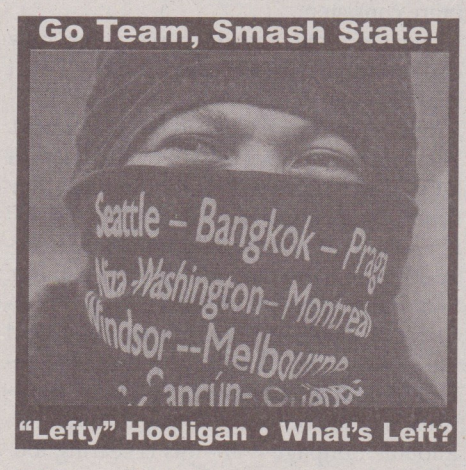
On a more personal level, the other thing about this scene is that traditionally the people are the smartest and most compassionate people around, or else they are the dumbest and most ignorant. I don't own a home, I don't have kids, and I don't spend a lot of money or overextend my credit to limits I can never pay off. I have a beat up car that I don't owe money on. I try and spend every minute of my time occupied in useful activity, even if I define useful activity as throwing Drake's Cakes at people. I see this gut-punching gas line homeless craze coming up as something to make people think in a better way. Of course some of them will break into my car and OD on my stoop, but think of all the positive possibilities.

For one, as cities lose out on billions in tax revenue that they've been wasting on false urban/suburban renewal over the past ten years, really fun shows will start happening in abandoned Sbarro's and rented out shells of where a Home Depot used to stand. 600 Starbucks closed in Manhattan alone this past quarter. How can anyone see this all as a bad thing? Who is going to move into those million luxury apartments built all over the city that no one can afford when people start moving out of NYC and back to the Midwest shithole their hipster ass belongs in when mommy and daddy can't pay their art school half degree no job rent.

Expect to see more after-hours clubs shoot up as the police force is overburdened by more real crime. Hey, if folks start using electric cars, that means a lot of spare outlets to steal juice from and have a show. People with cell phones can text message their thumbs off, which can beat any kid at a copy shop handing out flyers. Imagine what this would be like if better bands started coming up.

Folks who are unemployed have a lot more time to write music and go on tours, what I find most promising is this whole notion of people feeling too important for the shit job they really deserve. Not many have addressed this, but the whole web boom mentality has made people a little too cocky and businesses a little too accepting that you should work at a job a few years before jumping to some other place. People graduating college seem to have this attitude that they are so important; they can't sit around in one place and actually earn others' respect. What sort of economy can be built where half the people building it have only been around for six months and plan to jump ship in another three? These folks deserve to eat cat chow for a couple of years to get this through their heads.

So people not being able to afford to move to some big fancy city and hang out with other self-important people whose parents paid for them to live in the same odd place, not having some "cool" job they can brag about to their hairstlyed happy-hour friends. A life of hardship and abandon where you feel stuck and just wanna go out and let loose. Not having enough money to go to Warped Tour, and having to settle for someone's dirty basement. Actually having time to seek out better music since your satellite radio contract expired and you don't have cable anymore. Sounds pretty good to me!



Did you hear the one about the online anarchist forum that became so flame-ridden, and so dominated by the sketchy clown antics of a single individual, its administrator shut it down and reconfigured it with strict moderation? Or the one about the prominent anarchist magazine that indirectly called for the deportation of a well-known anarchist publisher, attempted to demonize the victim instead of apologizing, and is now being boycotted by the larger anarchist community?

Hilarious stuff.

Apparently, state repression is no longer required to destroy anarchism. Left to its own devices, anarchism invariably self-destructs, without any outside assistance. But there I go again, being all anti-anarchist. I don't want to feed anyone's persecution complex, so lets go on to more important subjects. Like the upcoming elections, which seem infinitely more relevant to people's lives when compared to anarchism.

I've talked about voting and electoral politics a number of times in the past, so I won't repeat myself here. Instead, I want to spend a little time discussing a take on the November elections that seems to be common not just on the Left, but on the left of the Left. We need to be prepared to engage people who become disappointed, or disillusioned, if Obama loses the elections, or if Obama wins but turns out to be the corporate shill we know that he is. All those young kids and disaffected voters who have been energized by Obama's campaign are bound to fall, and fall hard, once the 2008 elections play themselves out. We need to be there to explain to people what went wrong, and to show them the alternative.

But what exactly is the alternative? Mindless activism in the streets? This or that ineffectual political organization or third party? The one true, and truly ghastly vanguard party? An anarchism that can't fight its way out of a wet paper bag? A socialism discredited by social democratic practice, or the collapse of the Soviet Union? Pie-in-the-sky revolution?

The fact is that we have no credible alternatives to present to people. The one I favor due to my proximity to the ultra-left—mass working class self-activity, self-organization, and self-emancipation—is about as likely as Obama turning out to be a closet Black Panther. Nor is there any popular, radical social movement we can point people toward where they might develop their own alternatives. These political deficiencies are seen as the latest manifestation of what has been termed "American exceptionalism." Why hasn't the US seen the rise of broad-based working class and socialist movements? Everything from the frontier, to slavery, to individualism, to the lack of a feudal past has been cited as the reason for American exceptionalism. Critics of this concept have argued that the US has had periods of

mass revolutionary upheaval in the 1880s, the early 1900s, the 1930s, even the 1960s, but there remains a kernel of truth to the exceptionalist position.

Nowhere is this more evident than in the proudly apolitical, ideologically incoherent character of the American public. People are as likely to decry big business, blacks and Jews, the banks, illegal immigrants, and big government for their woes, oftentimes all in the same breath. I used to think that only a sustained economic depression, or a couple more centuries of history could counter the factors that produce this exceptionalism. Aside from the defiantly ahistorical quality to American society, we don't have the luxury of even another hundred years, given the scale of ecological crisis confronting the planet. Furthermore, US capitalism has been rigged. A gradual erosion of the American standard of living to Third World status has replaced wholesale depression. Much like the frog that is put in a pot of cool water, which is then slowly brought to a boil, the American people will eventually find themselves cooked.

I'd love to be wrong. I'd like my old-age pessimism NOT to play out. I don't have much hope that'll happen though. Hope is not an option. When hope is coupled with economic expansion and affluence, as was the case in the 50s and 60s, it has revolutionary potential. Such is the interpretation of 60s rebellion based on the frission produced between rising economic expectations and momentary social frustrations. It's in line with the notion that uprisings occur, not when repression is at its height, but when things ease up a bit. Place hope in conjunction with utter and complete desperation though, and there is horror.

Tadeusz Borowski, a Nazi concentration camp survivor, had this to say about the relationship between hope and holocaust in his short story collection *This Way for the Gas, Ladies and Gentlemen*:

Despite the madness of war, we lived for a world that would be different. For a better world to come when all this is over. And perhaps even our being here is a step towards that world. Do you really think that, without the hope that such a world is possible, that the rights of man will be restored again, we could stand the concentration camp even for one day? It is that very hope that makes people go without a murmur to the gas chambers, keeps them from risking a revolt, paralyses them into numb inactivity. It is hope that breaks down family ties, makes mothers renounce their children, or wives sell their bodies for bread, or husbands kill. It is hope that compels man to hold on to one more day of life, because that day may be the day of liberation. Ah, and not even the hope for a different, better world, but simply for life, a life of peace and rest. Never before in the history of mankind has hope been stronger than man, but never before has it done so much harm as it has in this war, in this concentration camp. We were never taught how to give up hope, and this is why today we perish in gas chambers.

I'm no fan of the idea that the more miserable things become, the closer we'll be to having a revolution, precisely because of the role played by hope. If people in death camps can still cling to hope, how desperate must economic and social conditions get before the American people give up hope and revolt? And if a world that is ecologically gutted, economically bankrupt, and socially devastated finally impels people into revolution, can the socialism built upon such a shattered foundation be anything but a travesty?

Let's sketch out the full extent of the dilemma posed by the elections. Obama's victory would probably produce reforms that will make the lives of people in this country a little bit better. Such reforms, however, mitigate against any potential for revolutionary social change. We don't have much time to turn things around before a worst-case scenario comes about, so revolution is necessary, sooner rather than later. Yet revolution isn't likely in any of our lifetimes, even with a McCain victory and the misery that would inflict upon this country and its people. So, if revolution is not imminent, then anything that improves people's lives, even incremental reforms, is a good thing.

We can go around this circle forever. Much like the debate between whether social upheaval is rooted in total immiseration, or the relative improvement of social conditions, it demonstrates that there is no magic formula for revolution. Even if there was some as yet undiscovered recipe to break this circle, overcome the social contradictions we face, and instigate a revolution, simply knowing it does not guarantee that it will be implemented. I think that a spontaneous, mass working class uprising is an absolutely necessary element in any truly liberating social revolution. Necessary, but not sufficient. There is a role for revolutionary organization in this process, but such an organization in possession of the correct revolutionary strategy does not insure success. Nor do initial victories secure an enduring revolutionary society. All of these uncertainties make the dismal state of the American Left, not to mention those to the left of the Left, that much more pathetic.

Max Hastings touches on yet another aspect to the November elections when he wrote the following in "Talk, not bombs, the best course with Iran" in the 08/08/08 issue of the *Guardian Weekly*:

There is no doubt about the desire of both the Israeli and US governments to destroy Iran's nuclear plants by force. Two years ago, a Washington political guru suggested to me that Bush's last months would be the time to watch, when he became obsessed with his legacy. "Solving" the Iran nuclear issue, said my friend, would be foremost in Bush's mind. So, indeed, it seems today.

It has been contended that, if McCain wins the presidency, Bush will defer to him to take military action against Iran, trusting that McCain will "bomb, bomb, bomb Iran" as he quipped to the tune of the Beach Boys' "Barbara Ann" early in the primaries. If Obama wins, however, Bush is much more likely to launch military strikes against Iran because he wouldn't trust a Democratic president to carry through against that country's supposed nuclear threat. "Negotiating with the Iranians is a maddening business," Hastings acknowledges. "But bombing them would be a catastrophe for us all."

I'm not saying that folks should vote for McCain, or Obama, or participate in the electoral process at all. The November elections raise issues which may not have easy answers, but which are far more relevant to people's lives than the latest, cheesy anarcho-drama.

PERSONAL PROPAGANDA... To find out my real name purchase my book, *End Time*, from AK Press (POB 40682, SF, CA 94140-0682) for $10. The book is called *Fim* in Portuguese and can be ordered from Conrad Editora (R. Maracaí, 185, Aclimação, 01534-030, São Paulo-SP, Brasil) for R$ 24,90. I can be contacted at hooligentsia@ mac.com.

Citizen Fish Tour June 2008

June 18, 2008 – Daytona to Orlando to Los Angeles to Santa Fe Springs to Walnut to Imperial Beach to Tijuana – Maya-Rae woke at 2 am to nurse. An hour and a half

later, I was alone driving myself from Daytona to Orlando. Leaving both my girls behind with my parents in Daytona, I flew from Orlando to Los Angeles where Robert and Jasper picked me up at the airport, the rest of the band still sleeping at Mike's in Walnut. It was, after all, only 9 am.

Earlier, my separation anxiety made me nauseous-pukey. I can't stand leaving my girls. They will want me and I will want them. They will only be young once and I want as much of that as I can experience. Though these next six days will recharge me, make me excited to keep on keeping-on, and to do it all because life is too short, I will miss them like crazy.

By the time I'd landed in L.A., I thought that Maya-Rae must have already been looking for me; my boobs had already tingled with letdown and the front of my T-shirt was soaked with two perfectly embarrassing circles.

From the airport, Robert, Jasper and I drove to Santa Fe Springs to Nick's Tugboat Studios to pick up the shirts he'd printed for our tour. After apologizing for my busy fingers messing a screen still wet with bright pink ink, we made our way to Mike's in Walnut for our traditional Happy Family lunch, a total vegetarian Chinese buffet freak-out!

Hugs all around upon arriving in Walnut: Silas, Phil, Dick, Miguel, and Erika. We all stuffed ourselves and jumped in the van towards Tijuana.

For once, we arrived early; too early for Ubaldo to meet us at his house, we kicked around the sand at Imperial Beach. I had a short, personal wow-moment thinking how weird, in a space-time-travel sort of way, it felt that yesterday I was in the sand at the Atlantic Ocean and today I was at the Pacific. Yesterday my name was Mama; today my name was Jessica. Yesterday, I changed diapers; today I changed names. And in a couple hours, I'd have left the country. I sat remembering the last time the band played in Tijuana; Maya-Rae was on tour with me but she and I had to sit the Tijuana show out stateside as I did not have a birth certificate or any other documentation for her.

The clock ticked five and Ubaldo was freed from work. We met him at his house, unloaded extra merch into his garage, and made a list of the equipment we were bringing across the border to show the CBP. Ubaldo jumped in the van and rode with us into Mexico. Without contest, he won the award for not busting our tourist bubbles; any less of a host would have never let us off the hook the way we were gawking out the windows with cameras and taking in the sights up and down Avenida Revolucion and Emilio Zapata Street.

Everywhere we walked, barkers called us into bars and merchants summoned our dollars. The place reeked of border town. I bargained for three things and spent $45 that I had to borrow from Robert. Ten pesos to one USD.

The next thing I knew, Ubaldo and Robert had been arrested. They'd been walking down the street to move the van but to the Tijuana cops, Ubaldo apparently looked like a drug dealer and Robert looked like a too-weird-to-be-a-usual-suspect-gringo-tourist. During the search and finding no drugs on either of them, the cops didn't like Robert's box cutter that all good roadies carry. So they arrested both of them.

I worried. Just like a mama.

But in a few hours and the show still going on, in walked Ubaldo and Robert. Oscar had stayed with them the whole time where they were being held, to make sure they were OK and to speak on their behalf. The days of Tijuana cop roadside bribes apparently over, both Ubaldo and Robert paid a modest fine and were issued a computer-generated receipt and discharge paper. Neither of their papers made it clear for what charge they had been arrested, something about looking like a potential public nuisance, but Robert's read that he was an uneducated, unemployed Mexican citizen from Baja. Now that those Tijuana cops are all proper and by the book, we guessed that they don't want their newly upstanding law-enforcing reputations tarnished by arresting innocent foreigners. Yeah, business kinda sorta as usual.

Worrying over, I took in every ounce of the show. A band from Mexico City whose name I didn't catch, three banks from San Diego: Vena Cava, Tiltwheel, Bumbklaatt (Ubaldo & Oscar's band!), then Citizen Fish and Leftover Crack. Lots of dancing and drinking (and absolutely stoked to have seen Bumbklaatt!) made me feel much better about being essentially trapped in a two-story, open-air, puke-stench border bar.

Though I'd played confidently the first half of our set, I crumbled towards the end. It was the dust that did it. When I'd looked down as to avoid tripping over Phil's guitar switch, I noticed dust on my sax case. The dust that meant that I should have spent more time practicing for this tour than barefoot in the kitchen cooking for my charges.

Packed up and loaded back into the van, after more than 24 hours without sleep, I crashed out on Cha Cha's shoulder as we crossed the border back to San Diego, totally missing the spectacle of falling, breaking things onto a CBP when she opened the back door of the van to check for whatever and whomever she was checking for.

June 19, 2008 – San Diego

After yesterday's coast-to-coast whirlwind, I was glad to wake up knowing it was to be a no-drive day. Grabbing some food down at Pacific Beach, Dick, Phil, Erika and I inhaled strawberry smoothies and Pad Thai while chatting it up real good.

With more hours before we needed to be anywhere, I took off on my own to have my first two alone hours in a long, long time. Before becoming a parent, I never realized I needed alone time else I get tweaky. But it makes sense. I grew up an only child with too much alone time. So though I'm not too much of an introvert, when I don't get any time to myself at all for days in a row, it's usually necessary to change my name to Aggro Mama.

After my much coveted solitude, I'd regained enough for a phone call to me sweeties. The talk with my mom gave me even more relief than my two hours alone had. She reported that Maya-Rae slept through the night without me, was eating up a storm and not crying for the mama milk she loves. But when it was her turn to talk, she told me, "Come! Mama come back now!"

Emma-Joy was off having too much fun to come to the phone, a most excellent sign that all really was going well without me. And of course it was. It's times like these that give me the healthy reminders that I need—I do not need to be 24/7 mama on duty for all to be well and if anything, it's best for all involved when I'm not; the kids learn that other loved ones can care for them in different ways than I do, I get to be me instead of just mama, and as is the case this time around, my parents get to foster more of a relationship with their only grandchildren. In short, everyone wins.

A minute after the call with my mom and Maya-Rae, 'Nesto called from a payphone in Harlem to tell me he'd just been given a free ticket to the jazz show at the Apollo Theatre tonight. I thought how unusual this week is for us, all of us gone in three different directions thousands of miles apart. Him off doing what he loves on his own—a grant paying for him to research Anarchist periodicals at a collection in New York City. Me off doing what I love on my own—on tour playing music with some of my favorite people. And our daughters off with one set of grandparents getting lovingly spoiled. Yeah, everyone wins.

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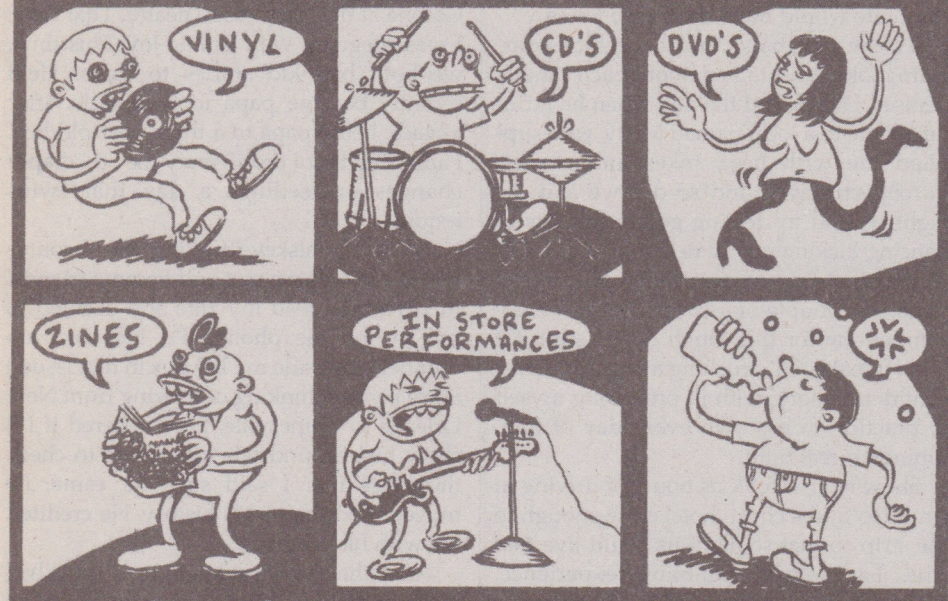

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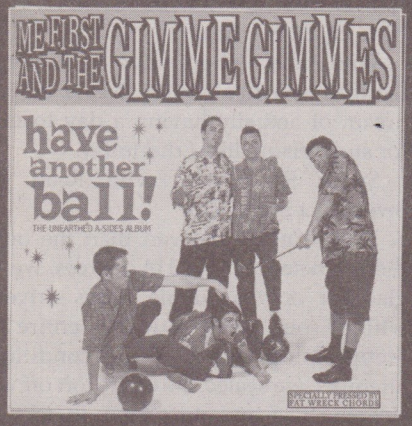

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Time to take off to the Che Café, we piled back in the van. I hadn't been to the Che Café, the worker's collective student space on UCSD campus, in probably nine years. It was still familiar and welcoming. They fed us vegan burritos. Lots of tables were set up with vegan, zine, and anarchist literature distros. Of all the posters and flyers being distributed, one in particular sitting on the Vegan This table caught my eye more than the others. Below a picture of a young man and an older woman wielding an automatic weapon read, "Long Live the Iraqi Resistance!" Now, I'm all for fighting to get the U.S. the hell out of occupied Iraq, but to celebrate the Resistance, largely made up of fanatic religious fundamentalists, who aren't exactly known for their pro-woman sentiments or secularism, among other things, made me wince. And I wasn't the only one. Eventually, Spencer put his eloquent and diplomatic hat on to question the Vegan This dude about the flyer, I joined in, others listened in on the well-intentioned, non-threatening exchange and finally, the Vegan This dude admitted he knew nothing about the Resistance and took the flyers off the table.

The bands that played were Jehovas Fitness, Bumbklaatt, Intro5pect and Citizen Fish. Between bands, Miguel played a few solo acoustic songs to an enthusiastic crowd. And I did a book reading, choosing a chapter about having taken Emma-Joy on a road trip with me to see the Subhumans when she was four-years old. In the audience listening were Jasper, Dick, and Phil, so that was great to for me to have them hear themselves included in the narrative.

Overall, it was an amazing show with a happy and respectful crowd. And everyone watched out for the young kids down in front, not just their moms and dads who brought them. Up the kids!

June 20, 2008 – Las Vegas

In the van at noon, we drove to Las Vegas. Well over 100 degrees of sweltering summer. Pulling up to the condemned house where the show was happening, we decided not to hang out in the treeless, desert dirt yard for the next three hours until the show started at sundown. Not much of an improvement, we pulled into a treeless, black asphalt parking lot in front of a Wal-Mart. Not wanting to enter the Mall-Wart void, Dick and I walked a bit to the closest hotel to check their rates. Too expensive to be so far from the strip where the true Las Vegas experience lives and dies, we sweated our way back to the vacant, locked van, left with no choice but to enter the air-conditioned hell to walk in aimless, non-consuming circles.

Eventually back at the 3805 house, I found a mini-ramp inside the condemned quarters. Lucky for these old bones, there was not a single skateboard for me to borrow. The unsunk screw heads along the gnarly seams between the sheets of Masonite would have tossed me for sure.

As the first band told their fuck-your-mama jokes and talked about each other's penises, Dick saved the day when he introduced me to a local named Misty, who supplied me with beer, tokes and stories. Intro5pect played and so did we and the night wound up feeling good with lots of dancing kicking up the desert dust.

The dust I'd brought from home on my sax case a couple nights earlier wasn't any competition for this tough desert stuff. I'd offed it real good, brushing away my lack of confidence along with it, promising myself to practice on my own every day of tour, tuning up real tight.

Show over, it took us hours of driving in circles to find a cheap hotel close enough to the strip so that some of us could live that true Las Vegas gambling experience. Checked in at 2:30 am, I was the only one who did not venture out to drink and/or lose money I already didn't have.

June 21, 2008 - Phoenix

Over a Thai breakfast across the street from the Stratosphere casino, I learned that no one won any money gambling, they barely slept and there were a few hangovers to be sweated out. Perfect timing for the brutally hot road.

Immediately, the van's loft became a sweat-soaked sponge. To help keep the six of us from broasting in the windowless metal box known as the back of the van, we DIY styled a box fan, bungee cord, duct tape, and yoga mat air conditioning rig. With the yoga mat taped into a long tube and one end taped onto the dashboard's air vent, the other end funneled air to us in the back. At one point, I sat on the bench with the tube on my shoulder, manually oscillating the coolies around the best I could.

Despite the ridiculous heat, I felt comfortable, satisfied, and in my right place. I always do on tour, soaking up every single part of it, despite the conditions. Age 38 and not wanting it any other way. It's part of who I am. I need to be doing and on the go. The punks who don't prioritize touring or who don't want to tour anymore confuse me. After a brief tourist photo op at the Hoover Dam and a few more sweltering hours in the van, we loaded our stuff into the Brickhouse Theatre.

Local to Phoenix, Subvacuum of Nothing was an amazing two-piece band. Though their band has a terrible name, they're my tour favorite! My old friend Ricky showed up. We hadn't seen each other since the Citizen Fish tour in 1999 when he surprised me by showing up in Corona at the Showcase Theatre. That time, I was pregnant with Emma-Joy. This time, we both had kid stories to trade. He'd recently become papa to twin girls, after already being papa to a three-year-old boy. I admitted that I didn't envy the 30+ diaper changes or feedings a day that twins require.

We had whiskey-drinking fun recounting how it was we met and became friends. In 1994, he'd read my zine and decided to call me on the phone. (I'd included my number alongside my PO Box in that issue.) Since he was thinking of moving from New Orleans to Gainesville, he wondered if I'd show him around when he came to check the place out. I said sure, he came, he moved, and the rest is history. He credited me with his life's fate.

After the show, we loaded out quickly, I bid Ricky farewell and we made our way to Will's house where Jasper, Silas, Dick, and I shared, until 4 am, a table round with smokes, drinks and talk—the kind to time together that makes us better friends for it afterwards. I gathered glimpses of their lifelong threads of friendship and band mate history that weave the fabric of their lives together.

June 22, 2008 – Tucson

With such a short drive to Tucson, we lounged at Will's all day. Never ever do I dream of actually having a day to myself for such leisure like I did today.

Swim. Read. Eat. Swim. Read. Chat. Swim. Get in the van.

Hotter inside the van than the outside thermometer reading 114 degrees, we were glad for only a couple hours drive. We whined out sweat out the entire way. Stepping up our DIY air conditioning attempts, we sealed the entire loft off with a sleeping bag and duct tape, thereby containing more of the yoga mat turned A/C duct's coolies.

Tonight's bands were Mari-1-na, Creosote, Intro5pect, Citizen Fish and Leftover Crack. The vibe of the show was amazing and full on, rocking out that 140-degree heat from the roadside brushfires along the highway today.

I counted at least four young kids in the crowd totally rocking out. One girl about

eight-years old, sporting a neck tie with her tank top, stood on a stool in the back pumping her fist in the air making up her own words to sing back at the bands. Another ten-year old boy, up front the whole time, I learned is a great drummer already. The other kids bounced atop their parents' shoulders. The energy they added to the collective frenzy made the show for me.

June 23, 2008 – Albuquerque

Not able to bear another all day drive through the ass hot desert, we left Tucson at 1 a.m. Robert drove all night and we were still on I-25 at 10 a.m.

I woke in the loft, bummed to be this close to home, this close to having to fly to Florida to pick up my kids, this close to the end of tour.

Then I remembered the amazing long talk I had on the phone with my big girl yesterday. She had told me how glad she is to be with her grandparents instead of on tour. I told her, "I know. Everyone wins!" She said, "Yeah, we all got to do what we wanted this time!"

Then I remembered the sweet talk I had on the phone with 'Nesto yesterday when he called to tell me he made it home from NYC. We counted the days since we last saw each other. Just two days shy of a month.

Rolling in to town at 11:30 a.m., we cruised by 'Nesto's work as to fetch a house key. But he was nowhere to be found. We found him at home waiting for us. After a quick game of smoochie face, he biked to work, I went to buy groceries and my tour mates crashed out to sleep, their snoring and stink filling the house. After laying out a spread of healthy eats for everyone to find when they woke, I took a nap.

Hours later, we left for the Sunshine Theatre. Loaded in. Hung out. Did an interview with Erika and her video camera and finished one up with Jasper, too. I hate the finishing up and getting things done because it only means this was my last chance to do so this tour. This is the end of the line for me. Tomorrow, my name changes back to Mama.

'Nesto got off work and biked downtown to meet me. Cassidy and Jason joined us. But none of my mama friends could get sitters so they could come to the show. I tried hard not to remind myself how sad I am that I haven't lived here long enough to get a childcare co-op going so we can cover each other's asses when we've got things to do other than parenting or earning income.

Spazzing out together for the first time in a month, 'Nesto had a shirt-off-drunk-circle-pit-time of it and under normal circumstances, I'd have wondered what the hell he was thinking, but tonight, I was all smiles alongside him.

June 24, 2008 – Fly to Florida to fetch the kids…

Again, the night bled into the next day. Up until 2:30 am with Silas, Dick, and 'Nesto, wonderfully drunk with love, friendship, appreciation, confidence, thankfulness, and whiskey smoothies, we paid tribute to George Carlin's passing with an LP of his from 1972, FM & AM.

After a two and a half hour nap, I peeled myself off my bed and out the door, and biked three miles to the airport. Miguel was just sneaking in from a night out on the prowl. I'd already hugged everyone else good-bye before we called it a night.

I savored my last hours alone among strangers, an anonymous solo traveler, despite the annoying chatting going on around me. Despite probably being mistaken for a rude, hung-over introvert, I was happy and my eyes filled with tears as each mile brought me closer to my babies.

Punkparents, get in touch: yardwideyarns@ hotmail.com

ALL FOREIGN JUNK

OK. I've got no time, got no time. I've got no time for messing around, for messing around with you. Here's this months foreign junk round-up, with a more economic approach giving the accumulation of material. I'll break it down simple for one month only while I catch up with you. *City. Country. Release.*

Canberra, Australia: CRUCIFIXION SQUAD and BLADDER SPASMS were essentially the same band, and they existed in our nation's capital for five years from the late '80s onward. Ex-member Andrew Norris has compiled the recordings of the band onto a CD and packaged them in a small fanzine with the history of the band, photos and fliers. The music is pretty standard punk rock—I'm guessing they listened to equal parts UK punk and Lookout punk rock ala Queers, etc. —and while I couldn't imagine this appealing to anyone outside of the small circle of people who the band entertained in their five year term as premier Canberran punkists, there is a small circle outside of this, internationally, of people interested in the documentation of punk rock in all it's permutations worldwide, and for these people I write: the CS/BS zine/CD would probably be best obtained after correspondence with Norro at norro@veebees.com.

Melbourne, Australia: PATHETIC HUMAN's *Unexpected Death* cassette would probably best be discussed by someone not so closely involved in it's manufacture, but this is the perfect forum for it's, uh, promotion. Two songs of dirty, creepy hardcore songs that borrow heavily from the mid-'80s anti-hardcore backlash of sinister plodding beats and sax/reverb drenched guitar howl in bands like No Trend or Flipper, and then combine that with the anti-anti-hardcore backlash of speed (as in amphetamine and velocity) fuelled early '90s Californian Siege worshipping crowd. The result is good hardcore, and the tape is available from the band or from www.stainedcircles.com.

Also from Stained Circles is the Australian press of the EDDY CURRENT SUPPRESSION RING *Demons Demands* single, which was pressed in the US on Iron Lung Records. Both songs on this single are excellent. If you appreciate the more NZ punk influence on their latest LP than you'll love this single.

Finally to wrap up the Melbourne contributions to this issue, the PISSBOLT / COLLAPSED TOILET VIETNAM split cassette has been released. Two sides of horrendous scum noise. Perverts, filth, creeps. Pissbolt's recording is way more blown out with a perfect snare sound, and Collapsed Toilet Vietnam sound more menacing and indecipherable. Perfect mid-year gift for the kinds of people who, whilst licking the plasm collected in the toes of their loved ones, like a soundtrack of MERZBOW *and* NAPALM DEATH… playing at the same time. Horrific.

Brisbane, Australia: If you drank yourself into a stupor the night you find out Chelsea died, than you'll probably appreciate some of the newer Australian Japcore aficionados, like Sydney's DEATHCAGE (new single out soon, will no doubt spill ink next issue) and Brisbane's TEARGAS, who just released a six-song cassette tape of Nippon-inspired hardcore punk by way of *Feel The Darkness*-era Poison Idea. Unfortunately, the recording is murky and dank as opposed to raw and harsh, so a lot of the intensity is lost into the ether. Teargas have killed each time I've had the pleasure of watching them play live, and if

you share the fascination and dedication to Japcore these guys too, try to track this shit down.

Tampere, Finland: SOTATILA, Finnish for the Hamburglar character from restaurant chain advertisements in the '90s, plays raw fast hardcore, as you'd probably have to come expect from this area of the developed world, and their *Eepee* released by Kamaset Levyt / Plaguebearer is a pretty ripping eight-song parent friendly jam. The artwork is pretty typical—and terrible—with bullet belts, skulls, and munitions aplenty, and the lyrics follow suit in an appropriate and predictable manner.

Copenhagen, Denmark: I was surprised to see COLA FREAKS recorded their new single with ALICJA TROUT (LOST SOUNDS, BLACK SUNDAY and engineer/recording duties on some of the better new garage rock records from the United States in the last decade, including the incredible *Too Much Guitar* record from REIGNING SOUND), but they've definitely benefited from her pressing buttons or passing out on the couch. I've been a big fan of their snotty, melodic early L.A.-influenced punk songs since hearing their first 7", and most anything from Copenhagen in modern times is going to be appreciated here at N.F.J.H.Q., but, goddamn, this record is fuckin' great! These songs are catchier and sound better. Out now on Hjernespind, one of the only safe bets when it comes to Euro punk labels. Thanks again, Tommas.

For anyone reading this issue of *Maximum RocknRoll* that is looking for a little spiritual advice, perhaps a little push in the direction of personal/social salvation, I would encourage them to listen to the song "Point That Thing Somewhere Else" by New Zealand's THE CLEAN. All answers to the mysteries of life can be found in dedication to guitar that sounds like this… like Lou Reed said, you wayward fuck, isn't it pretty? Wouldn't you want to die for something so pretty?

People have complained relentlessly since this magazine spurted it's first effort onto the privileged streets of the psychedelic Bay Area about the fascistic control MRR exerts over the punk/hardcore/cunt scene worldwide, and after visiting the MRR offices this summer I can proudly confirm that *Maximum RocknRoll is* the CIA and as columnists/agents of oppression *we want to ruin your lives*. THE CLEAN, seemingly effete and limp, have written a song to carve into your mothers stomach. Get moving, young 'un.

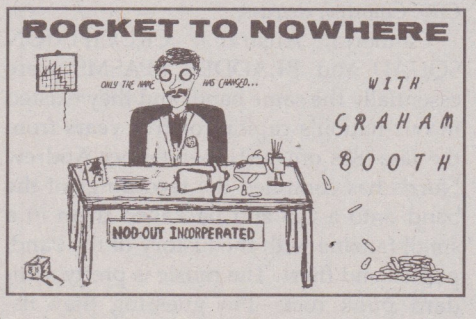
But seriously, reading through old issues of *Forced Exposure* to admire the audacity and lyrical genius of Steve Albini, most every page is dotted with references to *Maximum*, and it seems a lotta people who ask me about the magazine have attitude coloured from reading that or too many Agnostic Front interviews. I don't mean to appear like I'm the kinda guy who likes to give a stack of paper a thorough rimming, but people need to come to terms with the fact that it is 2008 and MRR is still publishing according to the same principals it has always had; to it's detriment *and* appeal, the level of it's usefulness is always reliant on the submissions of soft cases like *you*.

YOU. I know YOU. YOU are a wimp. YOU read *MRR* casually from time to time to see exactly how Vinnie Stigma was right in persecuting them for their beliefs. YOU pick it up to check out the review of your zine/band and get frustrated because they didn't reference the obvious Judge influence on your third-rate metal band. YOU get pissed because Craig from your town wrote a scene report and didn't include your pissant weak band that just might get a recording contract with some pissant weak label, if only… YOU are a puppet. Why don't YOU pretend you have a purpose in life beyond wasting food and flushing sperm down the toilet every evening and, uh, engage?

I'm not attempting to give a BYO pep talk, but keep it in mind next time you're wiping your ass, frustrated because, "MRR doesn't do this for me."

If you play punk, hardcore, garage noise, or any music with a bit of grit and rawness to it, or if you write a fanzine that loosely covers the same sonic territory, and you *don't* live in the US, Japan, or Sweden, get in touch.

My address is Daniel Stewart: PO Box 239, North Carlton Victoria 3054, Australia. If you'd like to email me, try distorttheworld @gmail.com.



First things first, I know the suspense has been *killing* everyone. Well you can all rest easy: I got the CHOSEN FEW *from St. Michaels* 45 and it's fantastic. For those that missed it, THE CHOSEN FEW released a super rare '60s garage 45 during their tenure at St. Michaels College in Vermont. In a total fluke, I found a copy for $30 Buy-It-Now on eBay, and suffered through a suspenseful week waiting to see whether it would actually show up.

To give you an idea how rare it is, it is currently rated #9 on the G45 list of 1000 Rarest '60s US Garage singles (check the G45 Legends page online). I gave it a spin, and as is often the case with '60s garage 45s, I wasn't blown away upon first listen. The record has a real unique sound—the super echo-y drums make it sound like it was recorded in a cave...or more likely, a gymnasium. It took a few plays to process what I was hearing, but by spin #5 "Get in on Life" was already burned into my skull for eternity.

But enough about last month…if I didn't know any better, I'd say today was Christmas. That's just what it felt like coming home from my PO Box this morning! I dunno about y'all, but I have a PO Box for all my mail receiving needs. I've sweated through too many days and nights wondering whether packages got stolen off my doorstep or left out in the rain. And it keeps the record collector stalkers to a minimum. So for about $15 a month, all my record related wares go directly to the PO Box.

The other perk with a PO Box is that, if you're not checking it every day (I check it twice a week), you're bound to walk in to find a mountain of boxes waiting for you. So many boxes in fact, that you almost get tired of opening them all! Today was a package bonanza at my PO Box so I am going through the day's arrivals to give you an idea of what a jaded old record burnout like me brings home on a typical buying spree. How exciting?! We'll see...

First up, there's an 8x8x8 box. I've been expecting this. Actually I almost gave up hope on it! It's got a Surface Mail sticker on the side, and it came all the way from the UK. I've always been a fan of box lots. Usually there are two-three things in a lot that I really want, and a bunch of other stuff I can sell and make my money back on everything. Sometimes you can get away with a crazy volume deal. To me, this box was a crazy deal. I think the final price was 22 pounds, which is like 45 dollars. The seller wanted to charge me like, twelve pounds for postage, and I wasn't having it, so I asked him to send it surface mail. That cut my postage down to six pounds, but the seller was adamant, "you realize that it may take six-eight weeks to reach you!" Yeah, yeah, I've heard it all before...

Well, today must be the last day of week

eight because this box took *forever*! For the last two weeks I regretted being a total cheapwad, convinced the package got lost or the guy never sent it in the first place. Well, it made it, but the box is pretty beat up, I hope the contents are OK. Two months is a long time, and I'd literally forgotten what was in the box aside from the three things I was totally sweating. The seller was one of those lazy guys who didn't bother to type out the records, and just had one barely legible photo to do the selling for him. I just about freaked when I saw the photo—not huge $$ records, more just a lot of more obscure records that are a total pain in the ass to find.

It all started rushing back. Here are some, er, highlights... ACTIVE MINDS first 7" (Loony Tunes)... meh, well, maybe it's better than I remember? ABSOLUTION 7"...on...what's this...mmph—black vinyl. Should be easy enough to sell anyway. CULT MANIAX *Full of Spunk EP.* Wow, what a bad record. Sad, since their covers are always promising. Their records could turn me off buying UK punk completely! ARMIA *Aguirre* 7" (Tonpress). Now *that's* what I'm talkin about. Awesome Polish punk, and their first record from 1987! Followed by the first SIEKIERA 7" *Jest Bezpiecznie* also on Tonpress with the picture sleeve circa 1985. RAD!

More from the magic box...SCHIZOID *Beer Thief EP* 7". I remember reading somewhere this was from Switzerland or something. But no, this is actually from Montreal! I just heard it recently, and despite the 1987 release date, this is great fast and rough hardcore with good heavy production, sounds straight outta 1984. Way to go Canada! Next up, ZERO POINT *Ha!* 7" (Span) from Denmark circa 1983. And what you couldn't tell from photo of the front cover in the listing—this is the first pressing with the electric chair on the back! This record is much better than I remember, another keeper for me!

And finally, the one I've been sweating over—SORTO's one-sided *Aina Valmiina* 7" (Ikbals)! I remember when all these mid-'80s hardcore records were around about ten years ago. A lot of the time you could even still find things on Euro distro lists for $5-10. I put off getting a lot of them since I was busy buying American stuff that I didn't have. Nowadays pretty much any Swedish/Finnish/Dutch/ Italian hardcore EP from those golden years has gotten really expensive, and I'm basically priced out. I've pretty much given up on getting the handful of things I don't already have, and SORTO's EP was one of those things I figured I'd never get my hands on. Not so! SORTO plays really lo-fi rough and fast hardcore, and the awesome super crude sleeve art has haunted my hardcore dreams! My only grip? The previous owner was a smoker, so all these records fucking stink! Anybody got some Febreze?

So, Box #1 is down, and a bunch more to go. Let's see. What do we have here? This package has a San Francisco return address from one Roy A. Loney. WTF? ROY A. LONEY?! What the hell did I buy from Roy Loney (uhh, that's Roy Loney of San Francisco-based FLAMIN GROOVIES fame...don't you kids know *anything*?)? Better rip this sucker open. Nice Priority Mail envelope, and what's this slab of cardboard? The dude got fucking tape happy with that water-activated brown strapping tape you used to see at the post office. He literally coated the entire chunk of cardboard with a double layer of brown tape!! How am I gonna get this off? Better start ripping...

But it's that fucking tape with the little pieces of criss-crossed strings embedded in it, this hurts my finger. And the tape feels kinda wet. Like, maybe it's just cold, or maybe it's actually wet. Do you think Roy Loney is the type of person to have a little wet sponge to help moisten the tape, or do you think Roy Loney is the type of person who doesn't have wet sponges, and rather enjoys the process of drooling huge goobers onto the tape and then adhering it to the cardboard? Is this drool? What the fuck did I buy from him? I hope this is worth it...er, what is this...JJ 180. Oh, JJ 180 7"! Rad! They're like Bay Area legends. But actually, I sold a copy that was missing the sleeve a while back, and some band member wrote me all pissed off because they're actually from Santa Cruz, and how could I be so clueless? Sorry dude.

So gotta save that Roy A. Loney packaging, maybe I'll file it with my FLAMIN GROOVIES LPs. What else have we got? Let's go with this one...and we have...THE FIVE *Act of Contrition* 7". Awww shit. I'm so fuckin busted. The dangerouscuddler told me he had a snipe programmed, and I didn't have the heart to tell him that I too had a snipe programmed, and that I was away for the weekend so I couldn't cancel it for him. As is oft the case, we rolled the dice and yours truly came out on top. Oops! (Yes, it was a double). Well, it serves me right because the record has an ugly mark in the lead-in grooves (which as it turns out, also skips). Whatevs, you win some, you lose some. Bummer.

You want more boxes? We got more boxes. How bout this one—a manila envelope. Must be a fanzine. It *is* a fanzine! It is an old Cleveland fanzine called, well, *CLE*, issue #3. All the '70s Clevo scenesters were involved and there's cool shit about the PAGANS *Six and Change* 45 being released and PERE UBU and ELECTRIC EELS and JOHNNY AND THE DICKS and X-BLANK-X and DEAD BOYS and a buncha other radness that I wish I was around for. At least I had been born in the '70s...you kids these days were born in the '80s...or even the '90s. *Ick*!

Still more shit. This really never ends, I'm certainly getting bored with all of it. Package from Florida. What did I get from Florida? Oh yeah, THE PANICS *I'm a Fan b/w Test Test* 7" (Superdisc) sporting one of the rarest early punk picture sleeves from Florida, if not the whole US of A. Their first single *Little Red Book* was on a KBD compilation I think, but it never did too much for me. Their second single, while not a KBD record, *is* a killer pop punk record...mainly the track "I'm a Fan" with super catchy bassline noodler. I happen to be quite fond of the noodling bass line, Canada's DRY HEAVES come to mind and shit like that. I should make a list of the best bass line noodlers, but I kinda forgot what all of them are, so I'll leave that for another column. Anyway, I still have more packages to go through so...

Oh yeah, a box from (Stanton Park). I saw some dude selling an '80s power pop 45 on eBay that I never heard of by a band called THE INSIDERS. The seller said it was solid stuff, especially if you like Merseybeat stuff (ya know, wimpy Brit-invasion sounding stuff like GERRY AND THE PACEMAKERS and early BEATLES and shit?). Given the seller's cred, I figured it would go for some decent snuff, so I scrambled to find a copy somewhere else before the auction ended. Turns out Stanton Park still had old distro copies for $5 so I got one. Who knows, maybe *you* can still get a copy…but only if you like the wimpy stuff.

Next up some package from New Jersey. Now what could this be? Oh shit! I literally just paid for these records like two days ago. That's what I call service! This was some store I found through their website. I remembered I found this total cheesy synth record recently, actually it's a side project of MIKI and ARMAND ZONE of THE FAST...one of the original '70s New York City punk bands. They played at Max's Kansas City and CBGB's and stuff. But later on in the '80s they morphed into crazy new wave gay disco dudes and were

electro/dance pioneers working with MAN PARRISH. Anyway, this one's called BRUNO BEATS and it's on the Zone Brothers' own Recca Records. They actually had two singles, but I don't think I would recommend either of them to y'all unless you're into cheesy synth wave stuff.

And whenever I find a store with something I like, I always go through the rest of their inventory to see if they have anything else. On that fateful day, my guy in New Jersey did have a few other things...a Philly power pop wave 45 from THE NUMBERS which as I recall has a great picture sleeve, but is kinda lacking in the musical department, some record by a band called THE PRISONERS that I can't remember ever seeing, and the real score this time around—a first pressing copy of THE CHEEPSKATES *Run Better Run* 45 on their own 5 and 10 label. They were a NYC '60s revival band, and Midnight Records later reissued it and put out a few LPs for them well into the '80s. This first single is a great one, one of my favorite '60s revival tunes up there with the best from Boston's THE LYRES, who I consider the best band from that whole scene. Also THE LYRES feature Mono Man of Boston's first punk band DMZ on vocals. Check out THE LYRES *On Fyre* LP (Ace of Hearts) for their shining moment, with an awesome semi-noodly bass player to boot!

So that's the box from New Jersey, just one more package to go. This last one is an LP. I know what it is already. I kinda splurged on it, and I was taking a chance since I've never heard it. I guess nowadays everybody is familiar with Portland's punk rock grandfather Fred Cole? He started playing way back in the '60s in a series of Las Vegas based garage bands. THE WEEDS 45 is a snarling garage punk classic. Later on the band was signed to a major label, who encouraged them to change their name to fit with the bubblegum pop craze and so was born THE LOLLIPOP SHOPPE. Their LP is a killer for heavy psychedelic rock/garage that sounded way ahead of its time, foreshadowing the sound of underground music to come throughout '70s. Punk fans should already know Fred from his resurgence in the late '70s with KING BEE, then into the '80s with THE RATS, later with DEAD MOON, and most recently PIERCED ARROWS.

But this particular box contains yet another Fred Cole release: ZIPPER. ZIPPER was the first band Fred put together after relocating to Portland in the early '70s. Psych collectors have coveted this album for years, but it's pretty rare, released on Fred's own Whizeagle label, and has remained a cult classic to the lucky few who managed to hear it. A German label reissued it on both LP and CD in the '90s, so it's around, but as has been the case with Fred's musical legacy, it's not too well known except to the devout fanatics out there who seek it out. Lately it seems like Fred is finally getting some more widespread recognition he deserves as people rediscover unsung classics from THE RATS and LOLLIPOP SHOPPE.

I've been on a mid-'70s musical trip lately, and ZIPPER seemed to be up my alley. This was actually my first time hearing them. I should mention, the original LP has a cool metallic gold ink on glossy white cover, and original copies all have this ugly bright blue tape around the edges to hold the front and back panels together. So all I had to go on is this is post-LOLLIPOP SHOPPE and pre-RATS, and there's a review in the Acid Archives book that basically says it's an out there '70s hard rock album worth a listen, but the song-writing is weak. Well on first spin I am pretty blown away! This is definitely '70s hard rock. It sounds like they were listening to a lot of BLACK SABBATH and a lot of LED ZEPPELIN. The drums are killer super funky rock, and Fred's vocals are way over the top. Honestly ZEPPELIN seems like a huge influence, similar to what Jack White/WHITE STRIPES are doing now, some 30 years later! I can understand why the Acid Archives folks might not fawn over this—it's just a great simple heavy hard rock album, the kind that us punk fans wish there were gadjillions of made in the '70s. Now I just need to track down those RATS albums. Uggh!

So that's a typical mail day at my PO Box. Well, there's not usually so much there, but you get the idea. Maybe by next month I'll actually remember some of my favorite punk bass players. *Laterzzz…*

A few weeks ago Gothenburg, Sweden's AT THE GATES came storming down the West Coast. I was in the Bay Area at the time and was lucky enough to catch the show at the Fillmore. It's easy to dismiss At the Gates as overhyped bullshit given the thousands of horrible melodic metal and metalcore bands they spawned in their wake. But to do is just as cliché as all those bands trying to cop their sound. There are several reasons for this.

First, At The Gates was around at the beginning of the death metal movement. And not just the death metal movement, but the Swedish death metal movement, the best and most amazing death metal scene of all. Tomas Lindberg, the band's vocalist, was active in the scene prior to the formation of At the Gates in many ways, doing his zine *Cascade*, setting up shows and playing in THE GROTESQUE who along with NIHILIST, set the stage for the death metal boom in their homeland. The Bjorler twins played in the band INFESTATION, and original guitarist guitarist Alf Svensson played in many projects including mid-'80s Swedish hardcore band ORAL.

Secondly, every album At the Gates created was a masterpiece, from their debut mini-LP *Gardens Of Grief*, on all the way up to *Slaughter Of The Soul*, the album for which they are most known, and in many cases the only one people have checked out (a fucking tragedy).

Lastly to write them off for their popularity gives no credit to the fact that they are ridiculously amazing live band even today after a twelve-year break. Not to mention, At the Gates became way more popular in death then they ever were life, they had no control over their own martyrdom.

When *Slaughter Of The Soul* was released in late '95, I bought the cassette the day it came out. I'd already been listening to the band for several years, and was into the direction they had taken on their previous release *Terminal Spirit Disease*, a mini-album that also contained live versions of several classic older songs. I loved the old style, but the new direction was more straightforward and direct, not giving up on the complex brutality of the earlier releases, just honing it into a razor sharp machine. Yes, they had melodies, but they always did and it was still aggressive as hell and Lindberg's vocals were top notch.

At the time of its release the album was definitely acknowledged as being great, but no one seemed to realize it would become the most influential metal album of the '90s. Judging by the fact that in 1996 At the Gates was touring as a support band and playing venues like the Berkeley Square (considerably smaller than the Fillmore) it was pretty clear people didn't catch on right away.

As time went on the album was picked

up on by a lot of people, but not in time for At the Gates to realize it. They broke up in '96 after a ton of touring for the album. They knew it'd be near impossible to write an album as good again and there was starting to be "musical differences" within the band. In fact, that they broke up at their peak has over the years added to their "mystique" despite high visibility by nearly all involved (SKITSYSTEM, DISFEAR, THE HAUNTED and CRADLE OF FILTH) and none of their subsequent projects being anywhere near as good.

At the Gates came to be synonymous with the "Gothenburg Sound" of death metal, which is basically just melodic death metal. But aside from At The Gates almost every band ever called that has been total wimps and posers not worthy of the death metal label. Just look at In Flames for all the evidence you need; they've been carrying that banner ever since without a hint of the quality of At The Gates. There's more fury in one At The Gates riff then the entire In Flames discography! The only Gothenburg band worthy to sit alongside At The Gates that had any integrity was the mighty DISSECTION who they toured the US with in 1996 opening for MORBID ANGEL.

Nowadays people call *Slaughter Of The Soul* the *Reign In Blood* of the '90s. I don't know about that, but there's no doubt that it is a fan-fucking-tastic record no matter what the haters say. The problem, as noted above, is that too many people have ignored the other amazing albums they did, which was clear by the crowd in San Francisco, many of whom looked confused and bored when anything aside from *Slaughter* tunes were aired.

The debut *Gardens Of Grief* is super raw, dark and under produced, and only hints at the classy complexity of the bands first two full lengths. Lindberg's vocals are more varied, going low at times and high others, similar to his days in Grotesque. The classic track "All Life Ends" first appeared on this mini-LP.

The first full length album *The Red In The Sky As Ours* is considerably different than *Slaughter Of The Soul* with supremely complex arrangements, tons of riffs per song, and even violins in a few places. It suffers from a shitty production, but the songs are killer nonetheless with brilliant stuff like "Claws Of Laughter Dead", "Neverwhere", and the live favorite (at least for me) and set closer in San Francisco "Kingdom (fucking) Gone". My vinyl version of this album remains one of the most cherished pieces of my collection.

The follow up to *Red Sky* (as it's often known) was the much better-produced *With Fear I Kiss The Burning Darkness*. It introduced killers like "Raped By The Light of Christ" which starts acoustically and breaks into some seemingly classical influenced riffing. Lindberg's pained high rasps are in near perfect form, a very stark contrast to the then popular Stockholm low guttural vocal style. To ignore this album and *Red Sky* is an unforgivable sin of omission to anyone calling themselves a fan of this band.

Terminal Spirit Disease came next and its blistering title track clearly illustrated what was to come on the scene-changing *Slaughter Of The Soul* that came after it. Interestingly the band left Peaceville after *Terminal* and ended up on Earache who by that time were suffering from a serious lack of decent albums. It's arguable whether they knew at the time they were about to get in on one of the most influential records of the decade, but once again Earache hit it big with *Slaughter Of The Soul*.

Anticipation was high when At The Gates announced earlier this year they'd reform for a final tour. Their logic was that they broke up under circumstances that left them feeling things were unfinished, so this tour was meant to close the book. No new music, no other tours (supposedly). Could they be as good as they were back when I saw them in '95 and '96?

The truth is, as good as they were back then (and they were fucking epic) they were even better in 2008. The band is acutely aware of their status as gods of the scene and the set did not spare the classics. *Slaughter Of The Soul* was played almost in its entirety and the entire crowd was going apeshit. They immediately ripped right into the fantastic title track, one that many count as their favorite, and proceeded throughout the night to play a few from *Slaughter*, then an oldie, then a few more from *Slaughter*, etc.

Now, despite the album's influence, which I acknowledge absolutely, for me the earlier albums are the real jewels, and I was eager to hear which older tunes would be unleashed. Mostly it was the old tracks that also turned up as live cuts on *Terminal Spirit Disease*. The band probably figured most of the fans who only owned *Slaughter* were most likely to have *Terminal* if they had ventured to other albums (it being *Slaughter's* closest relative both stylistically and chronologically). But the live older tracks from that album are some of the best from the earlier material like the aforementioned "Kingdom Gone", "All Life Ends", and "The Burning Darkness". *With Fear's* "Raped By The Light Of Christ" and the *Red Sky* track "Windows" were also let loose. About three original's from *Terminal* were also played. All in all it was about as good as it could get for a set list for both recent fans and long time ones like myself. I was especially stoked they ended with an oldie, which I think was a nod to OG fans. I awoke the next day to the worst bangover of my life, my neck completely thrashed and near broken.

Another reason I felt the need to write so much about At The Gates this month was I just finished reading the book *Swedish Death Metal* by Daniel Ekeroth. The book was just released domestically in the US this July, though it's been circulating in Europe for a year or two. The American version has the English cleaned up and some additional stuff absent from the Euro version.

Folks, this book is about as amazing a book as is possible for rabid Swedish death metal fanatics, of which I count myself as one. The thing is like 400 pages long with tons of interviews with members of Nihilist (Entombed), Morbid, Unleashed, Treblinka (Tiamat), Carnage, Dismember, Grave, Grotesque (At The Gates, Liers In Wait), Edge Of Sanity, Afflicted Convulsion (Afflicted), even classic punk dudes from Mob 47 and Asocial appear. Tons of old photos, flyers, demo covers, old zines, and an exhaustive discography with knowledgeable and humorous opinions by the author.

The best part about the book is that it is written like a fanzine would be written. No over analytical bullshit or posturing on the greater meaning of it all. No intellectual ridiculousness about its artistic merit. Just killer quotes and honest death metal fanatic discourse from a guy who grew up with it and was consumed by it (like me!). No one is here looking for outside approval.

The book is published by Bazillion Points Publishing out of New York and their website is www.bazillionpoints.com. I would recommend this book not only to Swedeath maniacs but anyone into metal or hardcore, and especially anyone not yet familiar or just starting out with old death metal. This is the perfect place to get acquainted with the scene that helped create the modern metal underground.

The author also agrees with me that the best album ever produced by the scene was ENTOMBED's *Left Hand Path*. For me, not only was that the best Swedeath album ever, but the best death metal album of all time—the guitar sound, the songwriting, the production and the vocals are all pic-

ture perfect. Yes it's better than *Altars Of Madness* and any album by CARCASS or AT THE GATES.

Plus, the "where did the blastbeat originate" debate is given another twist by the author who claims the Swedish hardcore band ASOCIAL was ripping the one beat as early as 1982, pre SIEGE, pre REPULSION, pre NAPALM. The saga continues...!

Anyway folks, between the At The Gates show and the Swedish Death Metal book, I've been engulfed in the old all month and have absolutely ignored any new and obviously inferior weak metal these last weeks. I'll be back next month to talk about some new shit again but we all know it'll never match the power and brutality of old Swedish death!

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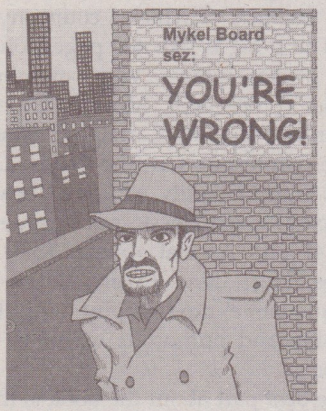

Woman is the nigger of the world.

—John Lennon, 1972

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Jimi Hendrix was a nigger. Jesus Christ and Grandma, too.

Jackson Pollock was a nigger. Nigger, nigger, nigger, nigger,

nigger, nigger, nigger. Outside of society, they're waitin' for me. Outside of society, if you're looking, that's where you'll find me.

—Patti Smith, 1976

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Guns don't kill people. Niggaz do.

—Bumper Sticker last seen 1992

***

Jesse Jackson uses the N-word.

—Headline, *NY Post*, 2008

***

When I hear someone say, "The F-word," it's like listening to mom talking about "pee pee."

Little Mickey shouldn't hear PISS. He might start talking dirty in front of the relatives.

There isn't an *F-word*. There is FUCK. It has dozens of meanings, from *whatever* (as it "Fuck it, who cares?") to *Wow* (as in "That was fuckin' amazing!") to *sexual intercourse* ("Wanna fuck?").

When I hear someone say "the N-word," it's like listening to mom talking about *poo-poo*.

Little Mickey should hear SHIT. He might start talking dirty in front of the relatives.

Yo, buckaroos. There isn't an N-word. There is NIGGER. It has fewer meanings than FUCK, but more connotations.

Wikipedia says:

***

"In the U.S., the word nigger was not always considered derogatory, but was instead used by many as merely denotative of black skin, as it was in other parts of the English-speaking world. In nineteenth-century literature, there are many uses of the word nigger with no intended negative connotation. Charles Dickens, and Joseph Conrad (who published The Nigger of the 'Narcissus' *in 1897) used the word without racist intent. Mark Twain often put the word into the mouths of his characters, white and black, but did not use the word when writing as himself in his autobiographical* Life on the Mississippi.

In the United Kingdom and other parts of the English-speaking world, the word was often used to refer to people of Bangladeshi, Pakistani, Kashmiri, Indian or Sri Lankan descent, or merely for darker-skinned foreigners in general; in his 1926 Modern English Usage, *H. W. Fowler observed that when the word was applied to 'others than full or partial Negroes,' it was 'felt as an insult by the person described, and betrays in the speaker, if not deliberate insolence, at least a very arrogant inhumanity.' The note was excised from later editions of the book.*

In the 1800s, as nigger began to acquire the pejorative connotation it holds today, the term "Colored" gained popularity as a kinder alternative to Negro and associated terms. For example, abolitionists in Boston, Massachusetts posted warnings to 'Colored People of Boston and vicinity.' The name of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People *reflects the preference for this term at the time of the* NAACP*'s founding in 1909.*

***

I give the NAACP a poo-pooload of credit for not abandoning "*colored people*," when the language fashion changed. But it's a damn shame that colored people... and everyone else... has abandoned NIGGER, running from it like Christians before the wizards of *Harry Potter*.

"Don't say that word! It's evil! Satanic! Witchcraft! You'll die!"

In 2008, NIGGER has more power than Albus Dumbledore. I don't want to give it up.

Patti Smith got it right. Niggers are outside of society. They are the trouble makers, the bad guys, the ones who refuse to fit in, refuse to be nice. If that's you, then embrace your inner Nigger. Call it by name: NIGGER!

Years ago, homos reclaimed the word QUEER. They figured, why let the 'phobes have the best words?

If you think about it, you can see the logic. Would you like to be a *homosexual*? Yuck. Sounds like a tweed jacket, pipe, elbow patches.

"Oh yes, I happen to be a homosexual. Pip pip ole' chap."

It doesn't matter how much semen has loosened itself in my anus. I am not a homosexual. You can bet my ass on that.

But ***queer!*** That's me. It's a word with power. One syllable. Hits you in the balls. Think of the rhymes: *Fear! Beer! High gear!* Yeah, I'll be a queer any day. Call me queer. Thanks! But I am *not* a homosexual.

And Nigger? For rhymes we've got *Vigor! Bigger! Trigger!* Oh yeah, I'll be one of those. Why let the crackers have the best words?

Nigger is more than a potent word. It's a potent image. A potent history. Like "punk," it's a word of contempt. And has been since the 1900s. Also like punk, it's a word to wear like a medal, if you're brave enough earn the contempt of others.

So Mykel, waddaya want from me?

Glad you asked.

I want you to sit under a tree. Fold your legs in full lotus. Rest a hand on each knee. On each hand, touch the thumb to the middle finger, making a circle. Close your eyes and listen to your breath. Follow the air as it goes out of your lungs, then back down... down... down... into your body. Let your consciousness travel inward with that breath. Concentrate.

It may take awhile, but you'll see it. First a black speck, then a black pea, then a ping pong ball. Keep following it. You're on the path of discovering your inner Negritude. The Nigger inside.

Surprise! You're outside of society. You don't want to be respected by stockbrokers. You don't want to show your ID at the bar door. You don't want to live from nine to five and go shopping on the weekend. You're a Nigger. Great first step.

The next and hardest part is to be proud of it.

You found it. Embrace it. It isn't *the N-*

word. It's you. And me. And Patti Smith. And every Nigger who did the right thing and earned the contempt of the world for it.

Punks! Smokers! Fat People! Pedophiles! You're Niggers!

Muslims! Femmy guys! Butch girls! You are too.

Cripples! Old people! Underage drinkers!

Outside of society, Nigger, nigger, nigger, nigger, nigger, nigger, nigger.

We are the world's Niggers. And I'm marching in front of the crowd, the N-word branded into my chest by a hot cup of Starbuck's coffee. Come on, fellow Niggers. Are you with me?

ENDNOTES: [email subscribers (god@mykelboard.com) or website viewers (www.mykelboard.com) will get live links and a chance to email comment on the column]

Cause and effect dept: In a classic example of mistaking cause for effect, *The Bottom Line* notes that people who are overweight are more likely to have bad breath than their fat-impaired counterparts. The magazine says the reason may be "because they eat a diet that promotes dry mouth and/or because of poor dental hygiene."

They've got it wrong. The bad breath came first. Then their friends stayed way. They got depressed. They ate to relieve the depression. They got fat,

We're number one... er... dept: The U.S. now ranks 19th, er... dead last... among industrialized nations in preventable deaths. This compares with 15th place 10 years ago. Why? Now *that's* not hard to figure out. Healthcare anyone? How about diet? Advertising? The insurance industry?

Fecal mental health dept: In Madison Wisconsin, police charged Tammy Lewis and Alan Bushey with "causing mental harm to a child." The reason? Alan Bushey, a self-proclaimed Bishop, said that a dead 90-year old woman would come back to life if they left her on the toilet where she died. That corpse stayed on the john for two months. The police said that the children in the house, a 15-year old girl and a 12-year old boy, suffered because of the smell.

The smell? *That's* the cruelty? What about the inability to use the toilet! Grandma's sitting there rotting. Where do you shit? In a soup pot in the kitchen? That's *worse* cruelty, I'd say. But I'm not a cop.

Sin tax dept: Florida State Representative Rick Kriseman has written a bill that would impose a $1 tax on "adult entertainment" clients to increase Medicare benefits. Says Kriseman, "People that frequent these businesses tend to go in with wads of bills. I don't think they'll miss one."

Angelina Spencer, executive director of "the Florida Sunshine Entertainment Association," opposes the bill.

"What we're opposed to," she says, " is an arbitrary tax that singles out one particular industry."

Oh, you mean like gas, cigarettes or booze?

Number One With A Bullet Dept: Kyle N writes me that he's in jail with Jay Scott Ballinger, the guy who burned down 33 churches saying he was serving Lucifer. Kyle gave Jay a copy of my book, *I, A MEIST*. Ballinger was "appalled and shocked" at my writing. Yowsah!

Insult? I'd say compliment dept: Kyle also sent me a clipping about a group of four people (two women and two other) from the island of Lesbos, off the Greek coast. They're suing a Greek gay rights group, asking that the group be prohibited from using the word "Lesbian" to describe gay women. The complainers told the court that the word lesbian "causes embarrassment to the women of Lesbos." These women, he says, are afraid to call themselves "Lesbians" because people might think they are gay. As of this writing, the case has not yet been settled.

I guess the folks from the ancient city of Sodom, are waiting for a decision to see if they, too, will sue. Stay tuned.

Not quite dead last dept: In its first-annual survey, the travel website *Expedia* asked 4,000 hoteliers their opinions of various nationalities as tourists. The Japanese got the most praise. Americans tied with Thais for an unimpressive 11th place. The French came in 19th. The Chinese were 21st—last on the list.

Death penalty for attempted suicide dept: Juan Alvarez ran out of his gas-soaked SUV after parking it on railroad tracks in Glendale California. A train ran into it, killing eleven people. Alvarez was arrested and charged with murder.

He pleaded not guilty. The man said he had intended to kill himself and then changed his mind. He couldn't get the SUV off the tracks in time, so he ran. The jury disagreed and found him guilty. On eleven counts of murder, he could face the death penalty. Does he hope so?

(Late Note: just before the deadline for this column the papers report that Alvarez got life in prison. I wonder if it'll be a long sentence.)

Bad guys try again dept: California laws have repeatedly struck down requests of parents for *home schooling*. Mostly supported by right-wing Christians (with a few hippies for added disgustitude), home schooling is just a way to pass prejudices, skewed philosophy, and religious intolerance onto the next generation of idiots.

Public schooling forces (or should force) race, gender, and idea mixing. It should challenge parents and open students to ideas they would not have heard. Parents say this is unfair. They should have a right to educate their children into whatever idiocy they choose. Of course they already *have* that right. They can teach their kids whatever they want... *after* school. That's the way it should be.

Unfortunately, the badguys don't give up. They're trying again and the courts must yet again decide the case. I'm not betting on the good guys in this one.

Let's hear it for God dept: In 1999, Oregon passed a law that bans parents from treating seriously ill children with prayer alone. This year, a 15-month-old girl died of pneumonia when her parents treated her with prayer instead of antibiotics. I say the police made a mistake. God, in her own way, is at work here, cleansing the world of future Christians.

Speaking of Niggers dept:

Barack Obama is trying his hardest to get me not to vote for him. He votes *yes* on the citizen spy bill. He says religion should "play a greater part in US domestic policy." Oy vey! He's acting like an African-American. Maybe Jesse Jackson was wrong.

The only decent thing he's done in the last six months is to complain that the *New Yorker Magazine* insulted Muslims. That took some balls. These days, insulting Muslims is as safe as insulting the KKK. *Not* insulting them takes courage. That courage might be the little piece of Nigger in Obama that'll still get me to vote for him.

There have been several times where I have been wearing a punk rock shirt, carrying a record, or had some other PR paraphernalia on me and have had someone comment how "disgusting" or "morbid"

said object is. I can remember being told by several people how disturbing the imagery on my records and stuff are, and sometimes by non-punk people, sometimes even by metalheads or people into different styles of punk. Let's face it, crust punk or whatever it is that many of you who read this column (if anybody does??) listen to has some pretty grotesque imagery. At least by most people's standards.

Of course, I think dark, grim, evil, etc. imagery is cool. It's evocative and atmospheric. That I can get behind. It fits the music, sure I understand that. What I do have as a problem is some of the use of corpses (real dead people not drawings) in punk art when there is no clear motivation behind it other than to look "badass". When Discharge used corpses (one of the earlier use of bodies as a political message) on its *Why* 12", it was to convey a clear anti-war message. Some bands use war photographs as a way to make an anti-war statement and that seems justifiable to me and I can get behind that. I have told people before who are freaked out at punk artwork involving corpses that it is a way of conveying a political message whether it is anti-war or anti-fascist, etc. But I realize more and more that I am not sure how much really I can make that argument anymore. A lot of punk bands seem to use it as a way to look cool, which in all honesty I think is fucked up.

Let's back up for a second. Bodies are just that—bodies of deceased human beings. People who had a life, friends, family, a community, etc. I believe that they deserve to be treated with respect and dignity. I think if their death was the result of war or something, and a valuable, tenable statement can be made by using photographs that depict the result of war or some social catastrophe then OK, I understand. But just showing on the cover the death scene of somebody who has committed suicide without any real reference to the cover (maybe a song or statement about depression or suicide? Maybe?) seems to me to be exploitative.

And I know where from I speak. I do autopsies for a living. I worked at a metropolitan Medical Examiner's Office going to death scenes and doing autopsies for five years. So it hits close to home for me. Dead people were human beings just like you and me and have lives, loved ones, and stories to tell. We shouldn't do anything that would cheapen that. There is enough in our society that cheapens people's lives; we don't need to cheapen their deaths. I feel that gratuitous use of real dead people in punk artwork is disrespectful except in the case where it is meant to convey a coherent social commentary. Soldiers killed on battlefields are evocative and grisly scenes and in and of themselves provide a potent anti-war commentary. Covers depicting a person who hung themselves or were shot to death are more questionable to me.

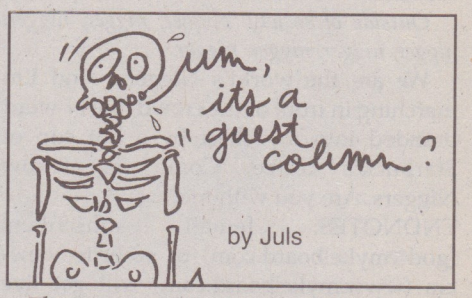
I think it's worth thinking about the imagery we create and why it speaks to us. Of course as I said often dark imagery fits the music and accompanies things well. The only thing I have a problem with is use of photos like I described. Our music, our message is one of DIY ethics, anti-mainstream, anti-capitalism, racism, sexism, war, etc. So when we try to address things we see wrong in the world, we advocate a more reasonable, peaceful, compassionate society. I think using pictures depicting human tragedy and misfortune deserve to be something used with caution and respect. I think unreflective use of those kinds of images creates situations where we are contradicting ourselves.

And yes, the worst usage of this kind is relegated to goregrind bands or death metal bands; although I will say a lot of death metal bands don't seem to use real photos, mostly artwork. It seems it's more common in punk really. This is the worst kind of example because it is purely because it looks "cool". Frequently bands use images from medical textbooks depicting surgery or disease, which are used to train people in the medical field. It is interesting how something academic and scientific in one context is apparently titillating to others. I suppose bands that use imagery like this are coming from a nihilistic viewpoint so I can't really expect them to understand what I am saying. When they die of a massive coronary after eating too many fritos and beating off to pictures of dead babies, I'll be the first to form a band for the expressed purpose of having the cover of our first record be a photo of their death scene. Har har, dork.

Fake gore, like the cover of some Impaled records, is completely different by the way. It's staged, its not exploiting anybody. It's like a horror movie, not real, not involving anybody's real suffering. That I think is more creative anyway, to do it yourself. I do still think it is worth questioning why we like horrific imagery—I have asked myself that a lot I know. I personally have come to the conclusion that for me, I have a morbid streak, and always have. I judge myself for it in the past but I realize it has always been imagery which interested me intellectually. Shit, I started reading Poe when I was like, seven.

Well, I have wasted another perfectly good column. SCUM NOISE LP out now 12 bucks to me postpaid US! SLEEPING AT THE POPES 7" and TDKM 7"s still out $4 ppd US. NEXT: GATT(Indonesia) / BLACK HOLE OF CALCUTTA (Chico, Ca) split 7"!!

Nick Daniels, PO BOX 18884 Oakland, CA 94619 USA. nickmangel@gmail.com



This summer, I went on tour as a roadie for my friends' band and quit a week in. It was totally a weird move on my part and I blame this book I read maybe five days into said tour. It was this fucking Edith Wharton novel called *Summer* that uses landscape to symbolize patriarchal oppression, like the misty mountains of Western Mass and its suffocating little towns circa 1917 serving to reinforce the lack of empowerment of women. I read it this one day while we were actually in some small towns in Western Massachusetts, going from hamlet to other hamlet, twisting around some mountains, rain dripping down the sides of the van. It was a day when I didn't really want to talk to anyone, not because of a dislike of anyone or thing, I just felt awkward, tour tension felt high to me but I think that was because I didn't understand what was going on. I had jumped into the van a good three weeks in, during a juncture that turned the tour down idle, purposeless roads of "What next?" and "Do we have a show tonight?" and "Is this scabies or jock itch?" (Turns out, it was both.)

Anyways, this unbooked-show portion of the tour was mostly due to a cancelled Canadian Maritimes leg that turned into an extended lazy jaunt in New England that I felt responsible for, being a Canadian who couldn't convince any other Canadians to book my Californian psychedelic prog rock friends in the stretch between Montreal and Newfoundland. What the fuck, Canada? We just discovered that foreign bands can legally and easily cross the border (I mean, unless they are illegal immigrants. Or have any sort of criminal record. And, sometimes, if they aren't white. Fucking Canada. So awkward.), couldn't

we try any harder to facilitate that shit? Why do the punks in Moncton hate touring bands?

On that particular day, the day I read that book, a grey ugly Thursday, someone very nice made us delicious pancakes and breakfast hash and I ate it gratefully on a wraparound North Hampton porch and poured myself into the book, which I had just been lent. I kept reading it as I got back to the van and as it careened decision-wise between Battleboro and Boston. I finished the book around maybe five or six that afternoon. They had chosen the latter option; we were en route to Boston.

"Scott?" I asked, when I finished. "Why did you lend me the most horrifying book in the world?"

"I'm sorry."

When I recall this day, I like to think that this was the first thing I said all day. Memory-wise, I'd sat brooding silently for hours into this novel, noiselessly trying to reduce the amount of contact I had with the dudes around me, trying to lessen the surface area of our dirty sweaty legs rubbing together in order to reduce my physical presence. I guess I was feeling like dead weight that day. The merch dude with no forum at which to lay out 7"s. No shows after which I could soberly escort the van and equipment and band members drunk with merry after a show of well attendance and great fun. I was purposeless, in a position that gave me a total lack of decisive input.

And then this book. Fuck. A young woman's coming of age is spurned by the restrictive behavioral code related to her sex and class, and in the height of her being physically and emotionally overwhelmed, she is duped into marrying her adoptive father.

"What a fucking bum-out," I said. "I don't want to marry my father."

I remember there being kind of an awkward silence.

"You don't have to marry your father, Juls."

Two days later, I was getting some dude at a house we were partying at during another show-less night in Boston to drive me to the Lucky Star bus depot. I was sneaking off into the night so I could take an overnight back to New York. Sorry that band. You are awesome. I couldn't hack it.

I don't like to write about singular sensationalized new items as if isolated attacks mean anything at all, but sometime after I left this tour, this kid was decapitated by another passenger on a Greyhound bus in Manitoba. I was in Brooklyn at the time, trying to explain it to Americans. I was like, "The Greyhound is the only way for a lot of people to travel in Canada. It's cheap and long. Days inching along the Highway 1 from one side of the country to the other. The prairies, man. I've seen so many fights on the bus there. Tensions are high, landscape is boring, everyone is probably poor and hungry. The bus driver is always pulling over, threatening to leave dudes in Moose Jaw."

Turns out, the dude with the large knife had only been on the bus an hour before the beheading so I felt weird about giving everyone this false impression that such a murder was practically the only logical conclusion to life in biggest empty space ever, where one was occasionally dragged across the country with other rural Canadians in a long and slow straight line that hugs the border, all vast, all talk, all isolated self-righteous individuals sullen about the amount of physical time and place separating them from the rest of the world. But fuck it. I'm done with Canada.

I lived in the ultimate yuppy-hippy city full of unthought-out anti-American sentiments for too long, and the last two years in the deepest darkest heart of it. I was working for a bike-weed delivery service, sitting down with stoned yoga instructors or whatever who would be all fucking Micheal Moore-y like, "Oh Americans what with their no health care and guns and stupid president and strict drug laws. What sheep, they should pull up their collective moral bootstraps. Gosh we are progressive," and they're wearing like Lululemon and listening to Enya and living ten blocks away from where doing sex work and being a lady and especially being a First Nations lady means you might be one of the thousands to disappear in the last ten years in this fucked up city. I'm like, "Fuck you. Don't talk to me about systemic policies as unaffected by a lazy complacent citizenship. That'll be fifty bucks for the dank bud. Please tell your other annoying but probably safe and full of disposable income peers about our service. Thank you. Bye."

I'm done with weed and I'm done with Canada. I quit. The Maritimes tour wasn't going to work out. I decided to tour America with American bands. I flew to Quebec, which isn't really Canada?or shouldn't be, at least?and then crossed the border to spend a few weeks pre-tour dealing with the most sexual harassment ever in my life. Sorry, other women of the world, but I did not sympathize with you all until these past few months. I used to be like, "I'm an insensitive asshole! Street sexual harassment? Easy to ignore!" And then I spent some time in places where walking by myself sometimes meant a car every block stopping to initiate conversations about my ass. But as soon as I entered the company of a friend, the street harassment seized. It was like the general public of the East Coast was playing this really mean joke on me. And I was mostly staying with dudes with whom I didn't really want to discuss the issue with. You know? I didn't want to start that conversation, like, "Have you noticed that there are certain gendered elements of my body that makes the general public interact with me vastly different than how they interact with you?" Because I was trying really hard to not be aware of these certain gendered elements. I was just, you know, walking around, going on tour, trying so fucking hard to ignore it.

DISCLAIMER TO ALL COLUMN READERS: I'M ABOUT TO TALK HELLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLA SHIT. (Be warned…)

FUCK JARROD FROM THE BLACK LIPS:

So, me and the rest of the kids in Gravy Train!!! hopped in the van this summer to rock some shows down South. I have *much love* for the Dirty Dirty as it is my natural habitat—I was born in the heart of Dixie ('Bama) and consequently I'm a Southern Belle. Black queer punk *whatever* there's this part of me that feels very at home when I go back and visit—a feeling I didn't have so much growing up there. This visit was about to turn STUPID.

So the Train *rocked* a show at the Drunken Unicorn in Atlanta. Rad Club. Hip hop kids, queers, rockers, and trannys fighting upstairs. I was blown away by the specific mix of this club, as it's the kind you wouldn't see in the Bay Area—not on this scale.

We got invited back home by Jarrod and Bengi of the Black Lips and shit was kool at first. Everyone was popping shrooms, doing shitty coke, and giving each other fake tans with this spray gun Hunx bought. I even brought this hot hooker boy over and we made out on the couch. Groovy

time, right? WRONG!!!!!
WHY I HATE JARROD FROM THE BLACK LIPS.....

So Funx was the only bandmate awake and walked into the kitchen, where Jarrod (not Bengi) and some friends of his who had showed up to the party later were hanging out, standing talking in a circle. They immediately tell her that they're talking about the Klan. Funx tells them she's Latina to which one of the guys respond, "We're *all American here*". Then one of the guys asks her, "*You aren't Mexican or Jewish are you?*" Funx is ancestrally both and leaves the room because she is (rightfully) freaked the fuck out. My homegirl had to sit down in the other room, come down on shrooms and listen to those fucking hipster redneck motherfuckers talk all this *insane* pro-Klan shit about how "the Mexicans" need to "quit complaining" and pull themselves out of poverty like the Irish Catholics (??????????????????) Jarrod soothed the hate talk with a story about how they called his preacher Granddaddy "So-and-So the NiggerLover" because he preached at black churches. Given the likes of his grandson, I'm sure "So-and-So the NiggerLover was a very radical pioneer indeed. AS FUCKING IF. Funx cried cuz she felt guilty for not speaking up after she got ambushed into a *shitty corner*. FUCK THAT.

I grew up rock 'n' roll and there was just aspects about the whole Southern garage rock scene that always grossed me the fuck out. There was always that crew of assholes who thought that imitating their asshole racist Granddad was *the* rock n roll thing to do. (Confederate flag-wearing fake-ass Elvis motherfuckers—they were *everywhere*). Then you have Jarrod and his crew: the updated 2009 model of this. They dress like hipsters (i.e. fags) but it's the same bullshit all over. I really do think he's mentally ill. *Why the fuck* would you invite a band with two girls and two fags and all mixed race to a party where you wanna talk about how much you dig the KLAN?!?!?!?! GODDAMN SON!!!!!! AT LEAST WARN A BITCH!!!!! WE COULD'VE DONE OUR SHITTY BLOW AT MOTEL 6. WITH INTEGRITY. All that pro-Klan shit *really* gets under my skin as I grew up down south and still had teachers that insisted that the Klan was on a larger scale nothing more than a "Gentlemans' Society". *WEAK*. Besides, most hip modern extreme racists wouldn't be caught dead in the antiquated (Christen-based) KKK. That's some dinosaur shit.

I wish Jarrod the absolute worst in life and would like to make it a point to kick his ass when I see him in hell.
No love,
Brontez

BRACE BELDEN is THE LAST PUNK

So you knocked her up, didja? You boyfriended the flooze three years back at a Leftover Crack show at whatever crap club those things happen at (I couldn't name one if I wanted to), and since then you've had an on again/off again relationship (she's on sometimes, she's off sometimes) culminating in you testing your testes one too many times in her hellhole and now you're the pitiful parent of one unfortunate tyke. You're twenty five, own no less than five Dickies jackets, and have sculpted facial hair. She's 19, smokes cigarettes but doesn't inhale, and has a green mohawk. There's two years and three months of high school between the both of you.

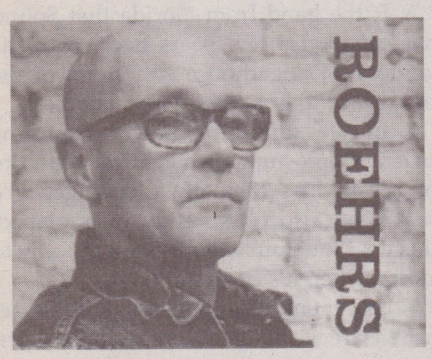
You and Seth finally married, and it's time to take the next step. Your relationship has survived his eviction from his commune due to power struggles within the Food Not Bombs infrastructure there (he wanted noodles, they wanted rice and beans), a two year period of "open relationship" where you tried and rejected lesbianism after years of claimed bisexuality and he made out with a trainhopper at a Leftover Crack show. It even weathered his dog, Groundscore, dying. Finally, you decide to mount the fella with determination, and are ready to raise a kid in an organic, earth-friendly environment. He's 27 and jobless (read: anarchist); you're 28 and a failed bisexual. In your defense, his facial tattoos and dread mohawk garner more stares than your shaved head and labret piercing, but you have a sneaking suspicion your kid will trump you both.

I could go on, and most likely would if this were my mag, but it ain't so I won't. Here's the short and skinny on the matter of punk parenting: It's a farce perpetrated by pathetic delusionites and who can't catch a cue. When that proverbial stork heaves that fleshy butterball down her chimney (that's sexist innuendo, by the way), it's high time to ditch the leather, bristle, studs, and acne crowd and hop in line at the Baby Gap. None of this "lil rocker" shit, cancel the order for all those "Pint Sized Punk" t-shirts you ordered offa the internet. Get him some yellow tank-tops and swim shorts. If you can't afford those pajamas for the little shit, take some night classes, quit the dishwashing job at the Pita Pit and become a copy editor at a portable grill industry magazine (they title your column about grill licensing "A License to Grill" and you quit, citing predictability). At some point you may have to hawk your Pist longplayer and your sleeveless Subhumans t-shirts to some shiteating 15-year old for six one-dollars and a stolen packa his little brothers diapers, but those ends gotta meet somehow, even if you hafta make 'em.

Selfishly (and I, a true-blue money-vamping heeb an'a half, don't use such a word flippantly!) you may believe that your current, probably pathetic lifestyle can continue much the same as it had. Considering your choice to pussypop the poor sucker you got brewing in your belly (floating right above your ribs but below the gizzard), you're not really one for good decisions. Here's a hint: once you have a child, you can't exactly drag him along to see Retching Red at Annie's Social Club (horrifically, both the band and club are real. Don't believe me? Look it up and spew all over). And regarding that tour your godawful band has booked? Cancel it. It takes a true no-brain to think that it's a good idea, even for a minute, to take your kid along on the road with your shit band. Either get your deadbeat ball-and-chain to watch the little asshole at home, or better yet, be a real parent and stay there with them. And I mean it when I say stay home: don't drag the kid to shows with you, and let it be fondled by freaks in fliphats and Duane Peters shirts, who're holding a Coors Light in the other hand and have one of them cigarettes dangling from their chapped lips. Kids are like dogs and rats: they've got weak ear drums and anyone who brings 'em to a show is a piece of shit, through and through.

Keep in mind, too, that though you may mohawk your infant (which, by the way, should qualify as child abuse), there's no guaranteeing he'll be a punk. Even though you bought him a Ramones t-shirt in his first few years, that doesn't mean he'll be predisposed to liking all those tuneless lout-punk bands. Give the kid a regular upbringing, toothbrushing and brussel-sprouting the brat and maybe he'll dig *Feel the Darkness* one day. If you stay punk once your child is born, you immediately

become white trash (this is true even for Spanish or black punks. The Japanese, though, to the best of my knowledge, have progressed far beyond breeding and even test tubing; Japanese newborns are digital), and your kid is either going to be the leader of Aryan Nation or a cop. Remember the obvious: your kids hate you, and want badly to be the opposite of you. So if you're a hippy droop quasi-punk, your kid is joining the football team and starting off a long career of half-finished daterapes and listening to Jay-Z in his friend's pickup truck. If you convert to Catholicism and maybe beat him with a belt, he'll be smoking cigarettes at twelve and dead at fifteen, making him a punk. The summary is simple: if you want to be a real punk parent, give up punk and be a parent. Your kid may turn out alright, or he might not. If you want to be a shitty parent, take him on tour and embarrass him by showing up with a GG Allin shirt to a parent teacher meeting. The solution is simple: Give up the kid or give up punk. There's trashcans for both.



DOUBLE CROSSED

Holy fuck! LOGIC PROBLEM from Carolina has a seven-inch out that will demolish your little pea-brain! Daniel (ex-CROSSLAWS) and his top quality Sorry State Records label have brewed up four songs that damn near tears your ears off! LOGIC PROBLEM comes to destroy everything in their path! With the help of Mr. Epic Problem (mastering) this record fucking scorches the earth! LOGIC PROBLEM lurches right into the meaty part of the entertainment with "DSM-IV" about 'psychopathic analysis'. This song rages! Song two "Double Crossed" starts off slowly and builds momentum like a run-away bulldozer! Fuck! Side two bludgeons you immediately with the barn-burner "Common Characteristics". This is an unbelievably powerful hardcore hammer! The beating continues with the final song, a furious thrash exercise called "Mk Ultra"! Whew! You have now been thoroughly clobbered by one of the most vicious punk bands currently performing! Contact Sorry State Records for your copy today!

Fuck! Brandon and Lauren have released another rock 'n' roll danger-filled EP! THE REPROBATES come smashing into your living room with their "Stress" EP. The Toronto, Ontario, Canada punks have come to destroy your crappy little world! This noisy punk cacophony is filled with discomfort and uneasiness! The lyrics reflect the frustration of people trying to survive in this fucked up world! In "Abandoned City" THE REPROBATES offer: "Living in a dead world / Living in a wasteland / There's nothing left for me… / But the rotting corpse of society…" To put the icing on the cake we offer lyrics from "Stress": "Waste your days under the ribs of death… / Company man until your last breath / Crumbling walls in your mansion of doubt". That's fucking bleak shit! THE REPROBATES languish in the doldrums of the current pessimism in the punk community – who could blame them? Get this dark and dismal reality check from the brilliant No Way Records label at www.nowayrecords.com.

LIFE TRAP has a new EP available on No Way Records. The "Solitary Confinement" EP blasts out of the chute with song one on side A, "Not Like You." This friendly reminder states, "I'm not fucking like you / I can't stand the sight of you / Every single day I want to hit you in the face / Every single day I want to put you in your place"! Yes! LIFE TRAP rolls through "Lost", the title song "Solitary Confinement" and "Too Young To Die". Every song seethes with hardcore punk venom! Side two punishes you with four more scathing punk songs. LIFE TRAP crashes through "Hopeless" and get to "No Excuse". Read these lines: "You take and take and take until there's nothing left / You got excuses for your actions – bitch just save your breath / You rape and maim and kill and fight any opposition that's in sight / How you try to cover it up still blows my fucking mind"! Fuck yes! LIFE TRAP doesn't even let you catch your breath. They attack with "Reckless Abandonment" and finish you off with "Wasteland". Yes! This is superior, fast and frantic hardcore with crazed guitar, wound-up vocals and smart lyrics! Get your copy from Brandon and Lauren at No Way Records!

Fucking look out you D-beat punks! The La Vida Es Un Mus label has a crushing new 7" for you! The ANGER BURNING "Warcharge" EP has the blistering DISCHARGE chaos that you need! This EP storms the gates with the first song "War Never Changes". Fucking brutal! Song two on side A is called "Destruction Never Ends" and this song continues the relentless D-beat assault! ANGER BURNING sings: "Soldiers crawling and dying of toxic gas, all made up by human hands…" Those are fucking rough lyrics! On song three, side A ANGER BURNING careens through "Fear". Fucking yes! Side two features "Just Say Do", "A Bomb" and the EP title song "Warcharge" with these grim words: "Women and children cries / The tanks roll on / Warcharge/ pain and agony everywhere / The soldiers march is on". Excellent! Order your copy of ANGER BURNING fron La Vida Es Un Mus, 178 Trelawney Estate, Paragon Rd., London E9 6PQ, UK. Contact ANGER BURNING @ Cederick Forsberg, Storgatan 10A, 81134 Sandviken, Sweden.

Yes! Durty Mick Records from Torrance, California has a treat for you skins and punks! Durty Mick has issued a new MAJOR ACCIDENT album entitled "The Clockwork Demos". This is material is from the 1980's era when MAJOR ACCIDENT recorded their first single. On this handsome new LP you get an early version of "Terrorist Gang" as well as "Standing On The Sidelines", "People Like You", "Headline Story", "That's You", "Self Appointed Hero" and "Black And White". There are two RAMONES covers, two STIFF LITTLE FINGERS covers, two CLASH covers and a decent cover of SHAM 69's "Borstal Breakout". The sound is above average for demo sessions from the eighties. As always, Durty Mick has done an elaborate job on the album's packaging. The heavy-weight cardstock cover has superior printing! The white vinyl is thick and hefty! Order your MAJOR ACCIDENT "The Clockwork Demos" from Durty Mick Records, 19106 S. Normandie Ave., PO Box 311, Torrance, CA 90502, www.durtymickrecords. com.

Until next month…see you fucks at the bar!

This month has mostly been spent working on the very item you are holding in your hands. What to say about that? A sarcastic comment about the columns of *MRR*

degenerating into people's per-zine diary doom... I am not sure if it has been formally announced yet, but I will be taking over from Justin as content coordinator in November. We have hired a very capable and awesome distribution coordinator to take over from me, Diane, who will be moving here from Brooklyn. I am looking forward slightly nervously to this new role at the mag, I have been a shitworker here for close to five years and am excited to have a bigger part in the shaping of the content and general direction. *That* sounds like a spiel from a cover letter, what can I say? *What can I say*! (The Shawn Brown version though...)

Top Ten for the end of time!

1. When someone asks you to move to a strangely cheap Brooklyn basement and form a band inspired by the first Meat Puppets 7", should you have agreed to that situation *right then*?? Does the song "In A Car" make you want to exist in some other place instantly?? *Right then*! In an instant instance! A fucking explosion of... the feeling of endless possibility enclosed in a 7". It's hardcore before the reduction set in and it sounds like a million things you can't explain and shouldn't even have to! What is enough to make one want to quit a job, abandon ship, and take aim for some mysterious basement? Somewhere that kids used to hang out and sneak cigarettes on stoops now taken over by the dreaded *yoga mom doom merchants*... I guess I'll stick with nega-times on the SF streets. Those are true signifiers of the end times you know; baby boutiques and craft supply stores, cupcake bakeries. Crochet me a noose, craft revolutionaries! Or perhaps a fourth wave feminist treatise on your Danish modern design blog indicating why endless consumption of niceness 'n' lifestyles is a viable alternative.

2. The only music I have been listening to this month has been the doomed, mutant, vengeance-filled sounds of Malefice and United Mutation. Too much weight on my mind, until I found a copy of the aforementioned Meat Puppets 7" for cheap because the guy thought that it wasn't worth anything being that it was not the SST version.... When I first moved here and knew no one I used to slouch around the fanciest parts of town, where the light is always golden and hits the socialite mansions and tech billionaire villas at the most nostalgic, synthetic '70s soap opera angle. Listening to Void bootlegs or X *Los Angeles* and staring in at showcase living rooms that have never been lived in, trespassing on golf courses and so forth. This activity was dropped in favor of hanging out with actual human beings, then that was dropped for walking out to the ocean, which was in turn dropped for working a million hours at *MRR*. A truly all-consuming situation—it's hard or rather impossible to convey how much your life revolves around the magazine as a coordinator. Walking manically round Pacific Heights listening to Rorschach *Protestant* feels like playing hooky because there are *layouts that need takin' care of*! Distros to contact! A mail room to clean, stacks of back issues to reorganize, interviews to conduct/set up... Bad debts to collect!

3. Other random things that have arisen; a text from RJ to say he picked up The Girls 7" for twenty bucks... The Girls were a proto synth/doomed art punk band from Boston who released one 7" on David Thomas from Pere Ubu's record label... I say proto-synth because while clearly there are some synths at work the music is more like a furious Pere Ubu "Cloud 149," Clevo-punk-damaged-drone than anything akin to what The Normal or Nervous Gender were doing. The song "Jeffrey I Hear You" is supposedly about the death of the singer's twin brother and a subsequent haunting. Listening to this otherworldly 7" with that back-story in mind adds to the eerie fervor brought forth by the sound. Apparently the keyboard player works at a record store in Boston and still has copies of the 7" he will sell to interested parties... Not sure what the exact deal with that is, but I do know this is totally worth hunting down, the cover is scratched-out black and white, an eloquent expression of the manic times contained within! I played it on the radio and Golnar made me fade it out because it creeped her out too much! Is that a good sign?

4. Probably the coolest thing this month was walking in on the Bruce Roehrs led Pierced Arrows interview, and talking to Toody Cole about playing bass and how being a musician totally transformed her sense of herself. I think the tape cut off most of what she said before we noticed it had ended (in fact I know it did since I transcribed most of the interview), but it was super inspiring listening to her talk about how she's gotten more confident and comfortable in her own skin as she's gotten older... A true triumph in the face of a society that writes women off as they grow. I made a bunch of my London friends buy the Lollipop Shoppe/Weeds reissue that came out in Europe in the early 2000s and then forced a Dead Moon show on them to encourage total indoctrination. This test failed; while the greatness of the LP was duly noted, they were somehow unable to recognize the truth, urgency, and honor in the Dead Moon sound, and wrote 'em off as olde-tyme, bar-rock boredom. While I can see how this error of judgment arose, it was still disheartening to see such greatness and power dismissed. The Coles to me represent how to do exactly what you want to do on your own terms whatever the cost—how to make your own life, your own idea of music and existence. It's true freedom, forging one's own path ruthlessly in a ruthlessly dull world. Pierced Arrows contains the urgency of the Rats alongside the timeless Dead Moon ideal, creating a sound for those with the ears and the desire to understand the value of such a combination...

5. I would also like to give honorable mentions to the *Communal Living* 12" by a mysterious band whose name I cannot mention...

6. F, the band from Florida that Sound Idea reissued a few years back, and The Randoms' Dangerhouse 7"... more of the soundtrack to frustrated anxious times!

7. In new music, for now, I salute the current Homostupids switch from skull to cat music. The Mentally Challenged 7"s have been also consistently over played. Music for the troubled is always the way to go esp. when it's done right...

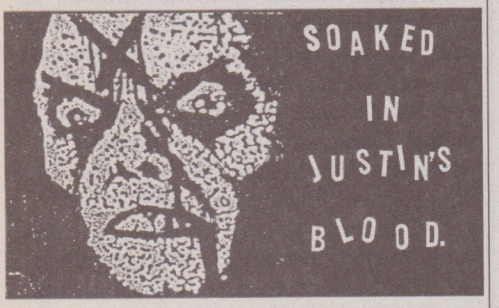
8. Last month Cissie mentioned the fact that we are working on some theme issues: a film issue (deadline Oct 15th!), a print media issue (deadline Dec 1st!), a queer issue (no deadline set yet!) and a health issue (deadline Nov 1st.). *MRR* is what *you* make it, as is punk rock/DIY in general, duh. We have a lot of cool interviews and articles lined up for the magazine, but if you have an idea or something you want to contribute, please do! Get in touch if you need guidelines. If you live somewhere that hasn't had a scene report for a few years, why not cover it yourself?

Also, we know our current website kind of sucks. We have had a redesign in the works for a ridiculously epic amount of time, which will eventually include a database of the entire *MRR* record collection with links to record reviews from the mag. This is a monumental task obviously, and the new website will be up long before this is completed... I am also hoping to create a database of the *MRR* zine and tape collection. Speaking of which if you are an older punk with demo tapes that you no longer care about, zines or fliers that have lost

some of their meaning, we would love to have them for our collection. Please get in touch! Like it says at the front of the magazine we can take tax-deductible donations through Indy Arts and Media...

9. whatwewantisfree.blogspot.com old columns 'n' shit on *thee* web

10. layla@maximumrocknroll.com—that's an email address! Write me! I am kind of a shitty correspondent. Just a word of warning...



As time pushes closer towards my departure as a coordinator here in Maximumland and I contemplate what my role at the rag will be in the future, I think one thing I'm almost certain of is that I'd like to try and use this column to fill the void left by the not-so-recent departure of Mr. Cordova and try to cover the more youth-crew/mosh-y/sXe hues of the hardcore spectrum. Not exclusively of course, but it's something that is severely lacking here and I'd like to change that. Well, I just plan on writing about hardcore in general. We don't actually have any columns dedicated exclusively to hardcore, though we certainly do cover a lot of it.

A friend recently scored a huge collection of records, mostly from the late '80s thru early '90s and of the straightedge/mosh persuasion. After filing away the records he wanted and trading off what he could that he didn't want, I got the privilege of taking the leftovers off his hands. You see, right now I am way into bottom-of-the-barrel crap from this time period/scene, inept mosh, as I have dubbed it, and was way more than happy to waste precious space in my room to house his scraps. It's one thing to be "a completely shitty record," but what I'm looking for is a whole other ballgame. The shit that makes your jaw drop and your friends laugh hysterically for like 20 seconds before ordering you to turn it off. I honestly like this stuff. So, in keeping with the future goals of this column, I feel, what a better way to start than a run through of some highlights from my score of some of the worst straightedge records of all time. Here goes nuthin'.

Thus far (I still have about 80 records to listen to) there are two hands-down champions of the This-Sucks-So-Bad-It's-Mind-Blowing award. The first one being a 1991 7" called *Chance To Live* by a band called Discontent from upstate New York. This fuckin' thing is the gold-standard of "inept mosh" and leaves all competition in the dust. The vocals are so loud in the mix and I'd be hard-pressed to find a finer example just how off time a singer could be that it's incredible. A telltale sign of "inept mosh" is that fucking terribly piercing high-end early-'90s wandering bass sound, which is most definitely present here. With different vocals *Chance To Live* could be another sub-sub-par early '90s NYHC record but as is, this platter is easily among the worst of the worst and thus one of the best records ever.

The other was a familiar face—something that a couple friends of mine had during my hardcore infancy but don't recall ever hearing—though I was wholeheartedly surprised to see that it was released on such as high-caliber a label as Nemesis and produced by none other than Bad Religion's own Mr. Epitaph Brett Gurewitz. I'm talking about Once And For All's *Thinking Man's World* 7". What better way to open a shitty record than some god-awful fuckin' slap bass. Oh, and what's better is that said playing technique runs through the whole first song (and obviously most of the record). Track-two is a rotten adaptation of that "War, huh, good god, what is it good for..." song that starts with the *A-Team* theme song. Ugh. Woah, I can't believe I made it this far with out mentioning that the vocals are the some of the worst faux-rapping I've ever wrapped my ears around. I mean, this dude's really actually trying to rap. Fuck. A true gem.

It would also be unfair to let this column go by without mentioning the record that sparked my interest in finding more records like this: Step Aside's *I'll Take Darkness* 7". I got this a while ago (though I did score a second copy from this collection) and I doubt Graham had any idea what kind of monster would be unleashed when he said "Oof, that record is bad," or something to that effect, at Amoeba during one of his recent visits, cause I bought it anyway. Definitely more "together" than the Discontent 7", but this is just sloppy enough and with just the right "wrong" production to hang on. One or two more practices and these dudes would slip right into the forgettable zone.

There were also some surprises in this box of records too. Some shit I had never heard of that was actually pretty good (obviously second or even third tier, but still good): the early-era Rev. stylings of Powerhouse's 7" from '89 on New Age Records, Pittbull's "I've Given Up/Don't make Me" 7" fuckin' rules, both B'Zrker 7"s rule, as does the 7" from Leckie and company's pre-Voorhees band Steadfast, along with some long-gone old favs like Eye For An Eye *Omega Drone*, Kingpin 7", and the *Boston Hardcore, In Memory of Reggie Lewis* comp (best Dive song). And last but not least I finally got back *The Current*, Outspoken's finest hour. There was a point when all the second-generation youth crew bands and those still hangin' on from the first were dabbling in the emo and this record (and the Turning Point LP) are the high-watermark of the time. Fuck man, New Age Records had the lock on that shit; Grip *Friction Burn Fatal*, Resurrection, Mouthpiece, Outspoken... there was a point in my life when all of my favorite records were on New Age. Now I wholeheartedly understand if you go and listen to some or all this crap I'm talking about and think it's pure shit whether you're hearing it for the first time or revisiting something. You should. This era was truly unique in that it was an era where pretty much every band sucked and I'm probably the only one out there that can still stomach this shit. If Grip played tomorrow, I'd go. I wouldn't travel to get there, but if it was close, I'd go and be psyched.

Playlist: everything above, *A Farewell to Arms* comp LP, Unit Pride 7", Coward/Gasmask split LP, Ultraviolent *Crime for Revenge* 7" and everything else on Riot City. Send your Dead Wretched *No Hope For Anyone* 7"s, Underdogs *East of Dachau* 7" and Krakdown 7"s to me at the *MRR* PO Box. Especially Krakdown.

A bunch of folks involved with *Maximum* are in the process of making a new website to replace the existing, abysmally prehistoric one. The design is currently being perfected by layout whiz Jill Hubley, and will be implemented by Steve Funyon. Ideally the new site will be

updated frequently and contain some unique content that isn't printed in the magazine. We've got some big plans in the works, but with *Maximum* being the contributor-based entity that it is, we're open for ideas. If anyone out there has suggestions feel free to write mrr@maximumrocknroll.com. As an aside, before anyone even thinks to say it, we will not be operating an *MRR* message board. If there is another feature that you think the *MRR* website could benefit from (in line with what we are doing with the mag) then definitely give a holla.

***

If you live in the Bay Area, chances are you've come across some walls that have been thoughtfully decorated with *Mondo Vision* propaganda. *MRR* shitworker Jon Off a Building has taken it upon himself to go to local shows armed with a video camera and he's edited together a videozine called *Mondo Vision*. He's compiled two episodes over the past several months and I'm thoroughly impressed with the creativity, flair, and substance presented in these clips. Jon's got some clever editing skills, which keeps each episode cohesive and interesting.

The first issue features live footage from Needles, Straightjacket Nation, Fragile X, No School Fridays, Parasites Go!, and Young Offenders, and the second issue has Grass Widow, Peligro Social, Traditional Fools, and Ecoli. Some of the bands are interviewed as well. The Peligro footage made me feel stupid for skipping the show (being grumpy isn't very rewarding). In both issues Jon devised a segment called "Grab Bag," which is based on the old *MRR* feature, "What's the Scoop?" These little clips give a cool context to the rest of the content. It's awesome to see people's different reactions to the camera—some folks are awkward and others are showy while the rest are just drunk or dumb. Most of the coverage tends to be local-centric (and we get brief glimpses of Jon and his friends hanging out and skating), so people outside of the Bay may feel a little out of the loop, but he's included national and international bands over the course of the two episodes, and musically there is something for everyone. If music isn't your thing, then fast forward to the profound conversations about SF pizza and the end of the world. I truly think that this is one of the coolest new developments in the Bay Area punk scene in the past year, and I hope Jon keeps pumping these videos out. One of the few things putting a smile on my beleaguered face. Check 'em out at www.wizardmountain.org/mondovision

Another great thing about living in the Bay is Thrillhouse Records. Thrillhouse was intereviewed in *MRR* last year, but if you missed the story, it is a Mission-based San Francisco show space, punk house, and record store/label run by Fred Schrunk. The Thrillhouse basement is the best place to see a punk show in San Francisco. The intimacy of a basement for shows always wins me over, and even though the ceiling at Thrillhouse is a little low it's still better than hanging out with randoms at an awkwardly lit, douchebag-ridden bar. Unfortunately the police have been showing up outside of events at Thrillhouse more frequently (and compiling a file in the process) so there will be a brief moratorium on shows after Halloween. This news definitely bummed me out and I really hope that Fred and Co. can pull through so Thrillhouse doesn't end up a Bay Area afterthought. Not to mention that this is the home to several people and finding a new place to live in SF is a dreadful experience. So best of luck, Thrillhouse 'cos the Bay Area won't be the same without you.

***

The only book that I've been able to read and finish this year is *Enter Naomi*. This book is a biography of sorts, written by longtime SST employee Joe Carducci, and the focal point is Naomi Petersen, who was the SST house photographer back in the day. As much as the focus is on Naomi, the book also gives a lot of history about SST. Joe talks in detail about the on-goings at the many SST HQs and touches on Black Flag, the Minutemen, Saccharine Trust, the Meat Puppets, St Vitus, the whole lot of it. If you're at all interested in reading about the unique sub-subculture that was SST then you will probably find *Enter Naomi* as addictive as I did. The tales regarding the SST/Black Flag work ethic still fascinate me. It's so rare to encounter people willing to give so much without financial compensation, but these folks did it because, for whatever inane reason, they believed in what they were doing. They enjoyed their niche in the world with or without money. Eventually some of them achieved remarkable financial dividends (check out Mugger's mindblowing appearance in *American Hardcore* for proof of this—Henry and Greg ain't hurtin' in the pocket either), but reading about their labor-of-love years is inspiring nonetheless. All in all, Joe managed to intertwine the stories of Naomi, SST, and his own life to write one of the more interesting books on punk and he did it in a way that he won't have to bear the embarrassing tag of punk historian.

Endnotes:

1. I want to take a moment to mourn the one-year anniversary of the death of Albion House in Chicago. Those were the only parties that I've ever enjoyed.
2. *The Encyclopedia of Swedish Punk 1977-1987* is another recent punk book that has spent a lot of time in my hands. I wish all discography books contained photos as cool as the shot of the Headcleaners nerdin' out. I also really enjoyed the map of Sweden in the front of the book, from which I devised that Anti Cimex lived in virtually every single city in Sweden during their existence. And I thought that I had a problem with staying in one place.
3. The Violent Uprising 12" is the best reissue to surface this year. The colossal poster included is worth the cost of Euro postage. I wish all reissues had this much care put into them. Bootlegs—I'm over it. If you can't do it right then don't do it all.
4. Contact me at cissie@maximumrocknroll.com

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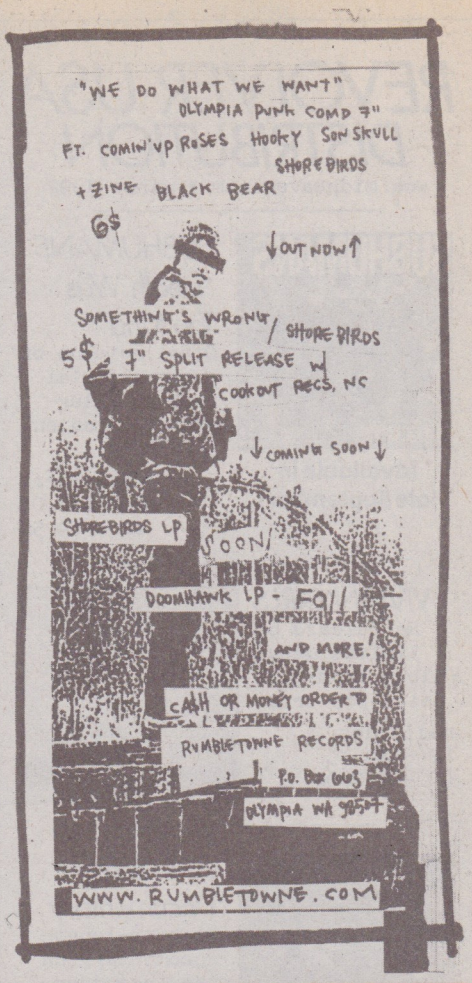

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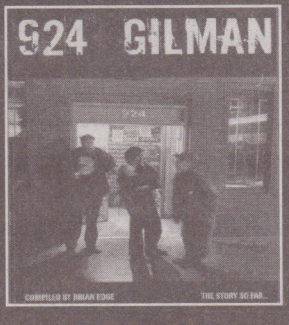

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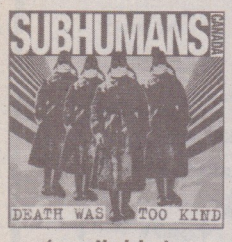

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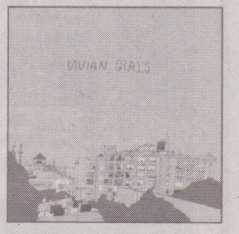

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MRR NEWS

MRR NEWS FOR ISSUE #305 COMPILED BY LAYLA GIBBON AND JUSTIN BRIGGS

BERKELEY'S LONG HAUL INFOSHOP RAIDED

From an article in the *Berkeley Daily Planet*

UC Berkeley campus police, guns drawn, raided the Long Haul Infoshop recently, seizing thirteen computers and other gear, but the reason remains a mystery. The building, which houses a collection of individual organizations ranging from the Needle Exchange to the East Bay Prisoner Support, was targeted by a team of at least seven officers.

According to the search warrant obtained by UC Berkeley Police Detective Bill Kasiske, officers believed the computers inside the officers at 3124 Shattuck Ave. contained evidence of felonies. The document did not describe the alleged crimes nor did it name any perpetrators, and no arrests were made at the time of the raid. In addition to computers and data storage media, the warrant targeted all written, typed or electronically stored documents containing information of people who used the computers inside the building. Pattie Wall, an attorney for the Homeless Action Center (HAC), was working in her office next door at 3126 Shattuck when police knocked at the door. "They asked me if I had a key, and I said no." Wall told the officers to check with the landlord, the Northern California Land Trust, but the trust's director wasn't in, so the officers returned, telling Wall they didn't need a key. After they asked if there was a rear entrance, the officers went down the center hallway at HAC, drawing their pistols as they neared the rear door, said Wall. Then the officers walked out the door and to the back door of Long Haul and made their entry. Meanwhile, Wall called staff at the Long Haul who rushed to the scene, also bringing civil rights attorney James B. Chanin, who has an office in the block to the North. Chanin said he was surprised by the warrant, since it didn't identify any specific organization. "I can't imagine the judge knew that the building housed many different organizations," he said. "It would shock me if the judge knew that." Chanin said that a warrant that targeted a specific group wouldn't allow police "to go into a building and take everybody's stuff. But that's what I believe happened, and that's not right."

Ian Winters, executive director of the land trust and Long Haul's landlord, said the raid was the first in his memory, "and we never had any problems even while Long Hail had the marijuana club here."

In addition to offering a home to individual groups, Long Haul board member Greg Horton said the building's Internet room provided computers to give online access for those otherwise unable to afford it. By the time the raid was over, only monitors, keyboards and disconnected cables were left. Kathryn Miller, another board member, said the seizure would prevent publication of the next issue of the radical newspaper *Slingshot*, given that all the material for the edition was stored on the computers. *The Slingshot* is produced by one of four collectives that are listed on the Long Haul's web page. The others are the Long Haul Infoshop, the bicycling advocacy group Cycles of Change and the Anarchist Study Group.

The raid drew a small crowd, with many of the observers taking pictures of the officers through the building's front windows and later as they carried out the computer hardware. Soul, a longtime broadcaster on Berkeley Liberation Radio, said the underground radio station had been impacted by the raid. "We had some of our stuff there," she said. "They got our hard drive, and that really concerns us." "This is really amazing," she said. "During all the resistance to the Gulf War and other times they never raided the Long Haul. It's the church we go to. It's the heart of anarchy in Berkeley." Soul said she believed the raid stemmed from the UC Berkeley campus police pressure on the treesit at the Memorial Stadium oak grove. "They know we've been associated with the treesitters." She also pointed to a Feb. 17, 2004 City Council resolution urging federal, state and local law enforcement agencies to refrain from taking any action to interfere with Berkeley Liberation Radio. Chanin said he had contacted the National Lawyers Guild on behalf of the Long Haul tenants. "I'm a neighbor, so they came to me," he said.

The raiders were comparatively neat, taping severed locks and screws removed from lock hardware neatly on the walls next to the place where they'd been removed. Several items, including a petty cash envelope, had been left neatly arranged in a doorway, apparently after officers had photographed them. At the end of the raid, Detective Kasiske declined to say what police were seeking, and referred questions to Assistant Chief Mitch Celaya, who had not returned calls by deadline time. Dan Mogulof, the university's executive director of public affairs, said he was unaware of the raid. Zachary Running Wolf, the first of the treesitters at the Memorial Stadium Grove, was at the scene later in the morning, declaring that he believed he may have been a target.

The building had once housed a medical marijuana clinic, but that facility had closed months earlier, leaving many at the scene to speculate that the raid may have stemmed from animal rights activism. The UC chancellors recently signed a joint letter deploring attacks on researchers who conduct animal experimentation in the wake of two Aug. 2 firebomb attacks aimed at UC Santa Cruz researchers. Berkeley researchers have also been targeted by protesters, including confrontations at their homes and vandalism.

CUBAN PUNK SPARED JAIL TIME

From an article from by BBC News
A court in Havana, Cuba, has ordered a punk rock musician to pay a fine of $30 for public disorder for playing his band's music too loud. However, Gorki Aguila was cleared of a more serious charge that could have led to a jail sentence. The lead singer of the band Porno Para Ricardo is known for songs that ridicule Cuba's communist government. He had faced a possible four-year term in prison for the crime known in Cuba as social dangerousness. The controversial law allows the jailing of people who the authorities believe have been displaying behavior that would indicate they could be on the verge of committing a crime. But, prior to the trial, prosecutors decided to drop the charge. Instead Mr Aguila was found guilty of public disorder for playing his group's music too loud while they were recording their new album. He was then ordered to pay a $30 fine and released. Minutes later, the outspoken bushy-haired singer told reporters gathered outside his house that it was clear the international interest in his case had played a key role in the last-minute decision by prosecutors to drop the more serious charge he was facing. He also vowed to continue criticizing the Cuban government and its emblematic communist leaders like Fidel Castro and the current president, Raul Castro. Nothing, he said, could ever be gained by remaining silent.

There has been no comment regarding the case from the Cuban authorities.

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DESPITE NEW ABORTION LAW, MEXICAN WOMEN STILL FACE MANY BARRIERS

From an article by International Herald Tribune
When Mexico City's government made abortion legal last year, it also set out to make it available to any woman who asked for one. That includes the city's poorest, who for years resorted to illegal clinics and midwives, as wealthy women visited private doctors willing to quietly end unwanted pregnancies. But helping poor women gain equal access to the procedure has turned out to be almost as complicated as passing the law, a watershed event in this predominantly Roman Catholic country and in a region where almost all countries severely restrict abortions. Since the city's legislature voted for the law in April 2007, about 85 percent of the gynecologists in the city's public hospitals have declared themselves conscientious objectors. And women complain that even at those hospitals that perform abortions, staff members are often hostile, demeaning them and throwing up bureaucratic hurdles. "We had to resolve how to offer the service on the fly," said the city's health secretary, Armando Ahued Ortega. "We were learning as we went along."

Now, even as the city's leftist government revamps its abortion services, the law is coming up against its biggest challenge in the courts. On Monday, the Mexican Supreme Court was to begin public deliberations on a legal challenge filed last year by the conservative federal government and backed by anti-abortion groups. A decision could come as early as this week. In a measure of the passions that the debate has aroused, the Supreme Court heard 40 speakers for and 40 against abortion during six public hearings that began in April.

To overturn the municipal law, which allows abortions during the first trimester, eight of the eleven magistrates must vote against it. The debate is unlikely to end with a court ruling. Anti-abortion groups have already said that they will push for a referendum if the court ruling goes against them, arguing that is a better way to decide such a momentous issue. "It is a debate over absolutes," said Armando Martínez, president of the College of Catholic Lawyers of Mexico. "It is an issue that is not really subject to debate."

In the rest of Mexico, states allow abortions only under limited circumstances, such as rape and incest, and Human Rights Watch reports that in practice such abortions are almost impossible to obtain. Mexico City has ignored the philosophical battle, pushing ahead with plans that officials say will help them live up to the spirit of the law. "For the people with money, this was not a problem," said Ahued, who sees the law as righting a wrong that put many poor women in jeopardy. "But for our people with no resources, what could they do? They went to clandestine clinics." After so many doctors refused to perform abortions, the city hired four new doctors to help handle the load at the 14 city hospitals where the city initially offered abortions. Now 35 doctors offer the procedure in city medical facilities. Because the city saw its service was not fast enough, it has trained doctors to use abortion pills when possible and to perform speedier surgical procedures.

It is unclear how many women may have decided not to get abortions at the already overstretched public hospitals

because it took too long to get appointments or because they had to wait too long for the required ultrasound. Since unrestricted abortions became legal in April 2007, doctors have performed (or overseen when pills are used) about 12,500 of the procedures at public clinics and hospitals, according to the Health Ministry. But at least some women have tried other methods. Alejandra, 24, who works for the city's women's institute, said that when she went to get an abortion last year at a public hospital, a social worker there told her that she would need to pay for her own ultrasound, which is supposed to be free, and that she would need to be accompanied by a family member. Scared off by the description of the risks and the procedure, she fled the hospital. She ended up taking pills to induce an abortion, without seeing a doctor, and developed a serious infection. She asked that only her first name be used because she said she recently received a death threat for speaking at a city event celebrating the new law. Another woman, a 27-year-old high school literature teacher, who spoke on the condition of anonymity, said her friends told her they were treated like prostitutes at public hospitals. She also took abortion pills but said they were ineffective, requiring her to visit a doctor to complete her abortion. To speed up treatment, officials are moving low-risk abortions out of overworked public hospitals into three smaller public clinics. The smaller staff there should be more supportive, they hope. On a recent morning at one of those clinics, called Beatriz Velasco de Alemán after a former first lady, in a working-class neighborhood, women waited with friends, husbands and boyfriends in a small courtyard, chatting, fiddling with their cell phones or staring into space. One 27-year-old married mother of two who had come to the clinic for an abortion saw no contradiction between her religion and abortion. "I'm Catholic, but now the law has been passed," she said as she went inside.

There is one sign of opposition at the clinic. Brenda Vélez and two assistants from the anti-abortion group Pro Vida arrive every day at 11am to say the rosary and hand out pamphlets. But unlike the very public battle over abortion in the United States, which is played out on the streets and through the news media, the two sides here have confined much of their argument to the courtroom. Even the Catholic Church, which threatened legislators with excommunication last year if they approved the law, has muted its political rhetoric. In the end, the church did not kick any lawmakers out for their votes. There have been a few public protests as the Supreme Court's decision approaches, but neither side has mobilized massive forces. It is the doctors themselves who are on the front lines when it comes to choosing sides. One gynecologist working at a public hospital, herself a new mother, said she was an objector because she was uncomfortable with interrupting life. Some women, she said, "are irresponsible because there are contraceptives." She asked not to be identified.

Those who have chosen to perform abortions say it has not been easy. Dr. Laura García was the only one of thirteen gynecologists at her hospital who agreed to offer abortions last year. Some days, she says, she performs as many as seven or eight surgical abortions. "I became a warrior there defending my convictions," said García, who moved to a new hospital in May where the city plans to perform abortions for girls. She said she had been insulted by colleagues and chased down the street by abortion opponents. But she said that having witnessed what happened to women before abortion became legal — she saw cases of septic shock and uncontrolled bleeding from botched abortions—helps her continue her work. "I am contributing to rescuing women's rights," she said, "In Mexico, women have always been marginalized." "I am a Catholic, but I have convictions," she added. "I don't think I'm going to hell. If I go, it will be for something else."

US SOLDIERS ADMIT TO KILLING UNARMED IRAQIS

From an article by Reuters

Three US soldiers killed four handcuffed and blindfolded Iraqi prisoners with pistol shots on the bank of a Baghdad canal last year, the *New York Times* reported on Wednesday. Sergeant First Class Joseph P. Mayo, the platoon sergeant, and Sergeant Michael P. Leahy Jr., Company D's senior medic and an acting squad leader, made sworn statements in January to Army investigators in Schweinfurt, Germany probing the incident, the newspaper reported on its website. The men each described killing one of the Iraqi detainees, as directed by First Sergeant John E. Hatley, according to the statements. Hatley shot two other detainees with a pistol in the back of the head, Mayo and Leahy told investigators, according to the *New York Times*.

US soldiers cannot harm enemy combatants once they are disarmed and in custody, the *New York Times* said. A spokesman for the US Army in Europe declined to comment, saying he could not speculate on any future legal action. David Court, the lawyer in Germany named as representing Hatley, was not immediately reachable.

According to Leahy's statement, Army officials directed Hatley's convoy to release the men because there was insufficient evidence to detain them. "First Sergeant Hatley then made the call to take the detainees to a canal and kill them," as retribution for the deaths of two soldiers from the unit, Leahy said in his statement. "So the patrol went to the canal, and First Sergeant, Sgt. First Class Mayo and I took the detainees out of the back of the Bradley (fighting vehicle), lined them up and shot them," he added, according to *The Times*. "Then we pushed the bodies into the canal and left." After the men were killed, Hatley told Leahy and Mayo to remove the Iraqis' bloody blindfolds and plastic handcuffs, according to the newspaper. The three soldiers then shoved the bodies into the canal and drove back to their combat outpost.

No charges have been filed against Hatley, Mayo or Leahy—all from Company D, First Battalion, Second Infantry, 172nd Infantry Brigade. However, four other soldiers have been charged with conspiracy to commit premeditated murder relating to an incident that occurred last year in Baghdad, the US Army in Europe said in a statement last month. A hearing in that case opened on recently and is still going on in the southern German town of Vilseck, the US Army spokesman said.

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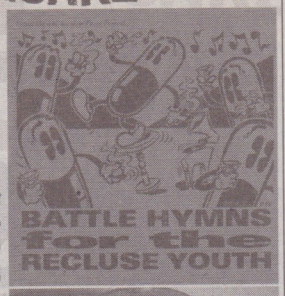

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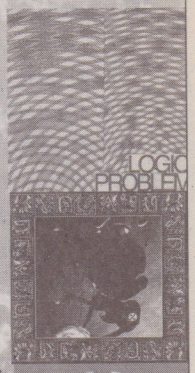

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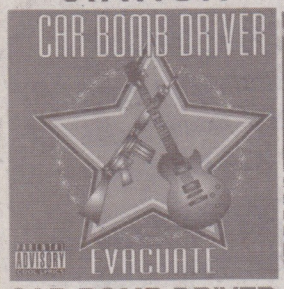

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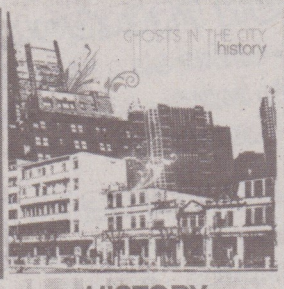

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test patterns

On a calm Sunday afternoon in Pittsburgh, PA, I sat down at with the Test Patterns the day after playing a send-off show for guitarist/singer, Yago, who had to return to Japan, where she lives for most of the year. For those not familiar, they play some sweet garagy power pop with melodies that just won't leave your head once you've heard them. Thanks to Bill from the Burndowns for letting us take over his living room to talk about American food, vomiting on cockroaches, and Donnie Iris. Enjoy.
Interview by Kyle

MRR: Please introduce yourselves and what you do in the band.
Dan: I'm Dan. I play guitar and sing.
Yago: I'm Yago! I play guitar and sing.
Kevin: Kevin, I play drums, and Matt (not present at the interview) plays bass.

MRR: You just got back from touring for a few weeks. Tell me a bit about it.
Kevin: We did thirteen days—half of them were really good, and the other half were, well, bad. It started off kind of slow. Philly, Atlanta, Memphis, and Minneapolis were the best shows.
Dan: We basically ate a bunch of food, got diarrhea, and drank a lot of beer.

MRR: Did any of the bands you played with stand out?
Yago: We played with the Carbonas in Atlanta. A band called Bad Sports in Memphis.
Dan: The Wax Museums in Denton, and Joe from Marked Men's new band.
Kevin: We played with the Birthday Suits in Minneapolis, which was sweet. Chicago was fun, even though Rot Shit cancelled, those lazy fucks.
Dan: Yeah, everyone is useless in that band. Including me.

MRR: Tell me about your record.
Kevin: We have two 7"s out. The first one, *No Translation*, came out on Contaminated Records, and the second one was put out by Shit Sandwich. We're working on another one now. It's actually being mixed, as we speak, upstairs, right now. We're not sure who's going to put that out yet or what we're going to do with it.
Dan: Could just go right in the trash.
Kevin: On the account that Dan is a bum and has no electricity at his place we had to record here and at Matt's house.
Dan: My electricity got shut off about a month and a half ago.
Kevin: And instead of getting it turned back on, he just moved.
Dan: We had to record everything at Matt's house and for guitar and vocals we just set up basically anywhere someone would let us in their house.
Kevin: Since it's still being worked on, it probably won't be out until the fall at least.

MRR: You're only really active as a band about half the year right?
Kevin: Whenever Yago works really hard and saves up money to come over.
Yago: I hope I can come back soon.
Kevin: She got stuck in LA's airport for three hours.
Dan: They detained her and asked her a bunch of questions about why she has come here so many times for this band and for Gito Gito Hustler.
Kevin: So she played the "I don't speak English" card for a couple hours. We're gonna have to figure out what's going on next—she probably won't be back for a while.

MRR: Exactly how did the band start? Dan, how did you and Yago first meet?
Dan: We've known each other for a while. We were just fucking around in the basement and started to record.
Yago: I played drums at first.
Kevin: I've never even heard that. You played drums?
Dan: We didn't really record it.
Kevin: I guess whenever she came over to the States for Gito Gito Hustler they would

alwaysstay at Dan's place. When it had electricity.

Dan: Back when I had a house.

Kevin: He called me to just do a recording, a side project type thing to have some fun. I just played the drums and they did everything else. We didn't even have a bass player. Then we put up a Myspace page just to see what people thought of it, and people liked it. Alicia from Contaminated offered to put out the 7" and play bass for us for a couple shows. So that was the initial thing. It wasn't a joke, just kind of a side project to have some fun. Something to do because it was different than anything going on.

Dan: Then people starting asking us for stuff and we had no time to record anything, so for the next one it was just four songs.

Kevin: Before we even had a bass player, we set up shows and went to play the Radio Heart Beat Power Pop Fest, we did a day show up there with Gito Gito Hustler. Alicia flew up and learned all the songs and we did two shows.

people. We ate awesome soul food—catfish and hushpuppies—in Memphis. We didn't eat any fast food really except for Subway once, which was good.

Dan: Matt only eats pretzels and beef jerky

Kevin: Awesome burritos in Chicago

Dan: Atlanta, one of the dudes from Carbonas worked in a pizza shop, so we went to check it out. It was a let down. Terrible.

Kevin: Let down pizza tour '08.

Dan: Sorry, Ben. You're our friend. Come to Pittsburgh and we'll get you some good pizza.

Kevin: Mineo's and Fiore's.

Dan: We're gonna go to Mineo's after this, then we're having a barbeque and lighting off fireworks. Yago leaves tomorrow so we're gonna finish recording.

MRR: Are you planning to go to Japan?

Kevin: That's what we've been talking about, since she got hassled by customs and might have to wait a while to come back.

Dan: It might be difficult to do another tour of the US.

Kevin: We're just going to try and save up money

worst movies ever.

Kevin: In Pittsburgh, any of the bands you play with, most of the people are in multiple bands at the same time so you always play with everyone's different projects.

Dan: Yeah, everyone in Pittsburgh is in like eight different bands.

MRR: Do you feel like since Pittsburgh is smaller it's easier to start a band? As opposed to huge cities like New York or LA where there's so much going on that it might be harder to actually sit down and start something.

Kevin: Yeah, Pittsburgh is basically like a small town, so it's more of a tight knit community. I can't really imagine living in New York City and having to try and find a practice space and having to pay all this money. That's the main thing I guess—we're all poor and it's a cheap city to live in.

Dan: Fuck New York. I'm sick of it.

Kevin: Yeah, we've played like one good show in New York. We're cursed to play there. Right now we give it the thumbs down. One time it was our fault for getting stuck in traffic.

Dan: She's a tough woman.

Kevin: I believe she was pregnant too, the entire time—hardcore.

Dan: Then we recruited *My War* Matt to play bass. You gotta play *My War* around Matt some time and just watch what happens.

Kevin: His other band, the Burndowns, they did Big Neck Fest and everyone was hammered and they put on *My War* and he started the van-mosh, hopping over seats and stuff like that. Any time you put that on or New Bomb Turks' *Destroy Oh Boy* he goes mental. He's a 32-year-old or something like that.

Dan: ...that acts like a sixteen-year-old, it's pretty amazing.

MRR: What year did the band start?

Kevin: Fall of 2006. We recorded at Dan's house in November.

Dan: We should talk about food, since that's all we know about.

MRR: Where did you eat that was any good on tour?

Dan: No good pizza.

Kevin: We had the worst fake pizza ever in Memphis.

Dan: Right next to the Goner Records store.

Kevin: Don't know the name of it but it was the worst. Apparently it's like a trap. People go to the Goner store and then they see "Pizza"—it ensnares

and try to do a week or two in Japan, which would be awesome.

Dan: But that's all in the future, it just kind of depends on the next release. Right now, we're all just poor and smell.

Kevin: I have no job.

Dan: I have a job. I work with old people.

Yago: I don't have a job yet in Japan, either.

Kevin: Matt's a banker! Haha.

MRR: What do you think of most of the shows around Pittsburgh?

Kevin: I think Pittsburgh has an awesome scene. There's basically a good band from every kind of genre.

Yago: I like the people.

Dan: Is it the best city in America?

Yago: Yeah!

Dan: She usually has to deal with a lot of creepy guys on tour in the States with Gito Gito Hustler, but has never had that problem here.

MRR: What are some of the local bands you are friends with or enjoy playing with?

Dan: Donnie Iris.

Kevin: Grapevine, Rusted Root, Velveeta. I washed the windows for the drummer from Ratt's mom's house once.

Dan: The drummer or singer from LA Guns moved to Dormont when I worked at the video store there. He came in and was asking for the

Dan: But we did get really good pizza. We drove from Buffalo to NYC, like nine hours, got stuck in traffic, missed the show, but then got good pizza in Brooklyn, so it turned out OK. I basically just base the tour around pizza.

Kevin: He was going to try and eat pizza in every city on tour, but failed miserably at it.

Dan: Yeah, the burrito experience kind of ruined it for me. I ate generic Mexican food in Austin and right before we played I puked everywhere. It was so disgusting. The back of Emo's just smelled like vomit. All the bands were loading in their shit still, and I was just in the corner. It was like 100 degrees and just smelled like a fucking asshole. It was the worst thing ever. I was throwing up on cockroaches! While we were playing all these burrito chunks were flying when I sang, all over the audience.

Kevin: All over the seventeen people that were there. We came in the day after Chaos in Tejas was over, so I didn't really have high expectations.

MRR: Well I don't really know where to go from there. Anything else you wanna say?

Kevin: Thanks everyone who put us up and helped us out on our recent stint.

Dan: Fuck bad pizza. Come to Pittsburgh and eat good pizza. Any final words, Yago?

Yago: Thank you American food!

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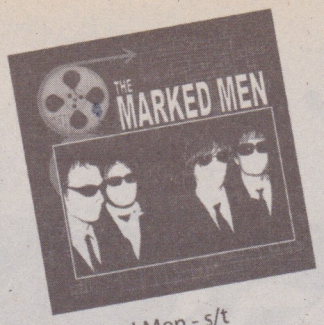

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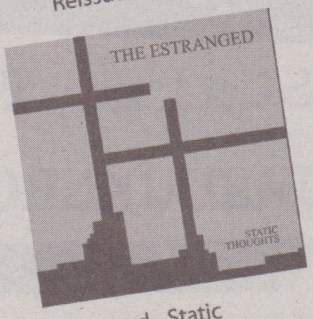

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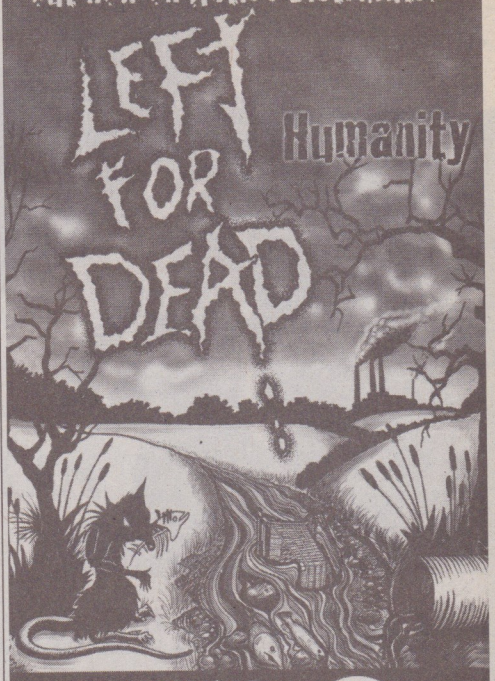

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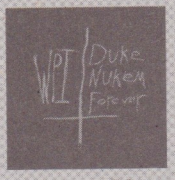

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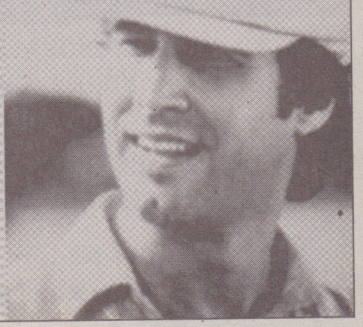

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PIERCED ARROWS

Pierced Arrows is the new band featuring Fred Cole and Toody. The two got married in the '60s and have been playing music together on a DIY level for 30 or so years with Dead Moon being their longest running and most well-known band. Kelly starting playing drums with them in 2007, and this new project was dubbed Pierced Arrows,(the term also appeared in the Dead Moon song "99s"). This interview was conducted at the MRR house, with Bruce Roehrs asking most of the quesions, and Ron Ready and Layla Gibbon throwing in a few queries as well.

Photos and Pierced Arrows logo by Simone Müller

MRR: Let's talk about the European tour. Kelly, you really have a pretty good recollection of that for a drunk punk. *(laughs)*

Fred: How many times a night would you go, "Oh God, Fred, you're not gonna believe how strong I am!" *(laughs)*

MRR: How long was the tour?

Kelly: It was seven weeks.

MRR: That's so fucking long.

Toody: We were doing fifty to sixty shows. Yeah, piece of cake.

MRR: And what were the cities that stood out?

Kelly: It was pretty good. These guys have always done really well in certain areas, and my band has done well in certain areas, but...

Fred: I think Scandinavia was the hottest part.

Kelly: Scandinavia was definitely amazing.

MRR: It's dark all the time and there's snow everywhere, right?

Kelly: Actually, we were there in the spring, so it was light all the time.

Fred: That wouldn't be good. I drink way too much for that. *(laughs)*

MRR: You have to extend your drinking hours to like, way beyond. *(laughs)*

Toody: That's okay. As a people and a culture, they're up for that.

Kelly: We played one show in Tromsø up in Norway. It was 700 km north of the Arctic Circle.

Toody: A college town, believe it or not.

Kelly: But the Arctic Circle's high enough, and then add another 700 km. That's pretty much...

MRR: ...the top of the world.

Toody: Well, they say it's the same distance from Oslo to Tromsø as from Oslo to Rome. That's how far north it is.

MRR: Is that as far north as you all have ever been?

Toody: Oh yeah, yeah.

MRR: And they were probably so appreciative because they probably get four shows a year up there.

Toody: Well, they get quite a few. It's a great community. You have to fly up there, but it's like a little oasis in the middle of tundra. It just happens to be in the right jet stream. The one guy—he and his brother own this club—he had a record shop for years. They've been kind of dialed in to the whole underground scene since people started going up there.

MRR: Do people come from beyond the Arctic?

Toody: Oh yeah, we have people that came from even farther north. They take the train down.

Kelly: A father and daughter came from 500 km *further* north.

MRR: You spread the poison about as far as you can at that point. So what was the most remote place out there you guys played?

Toody: Tromsø's pretty much it, especially in this band. The only place that was almost that remote was Oulu, and that's *way* the hell up there.

Kelly: Well, these guys played the Ukraine with Dead Moon.

Toody: Yeah, we've played some off the beaten path places.

Fred: I think the most talked about place, though, was that fucking hunting place that we played in New Zealand...

Toody: Stewart Island

Fred: ...where there was nothing but a gas station and a bar and fish and chips, okay. And the guy hired us there... we played three songs, and he goes, "I wanna hear something from the '60s. I wanna hear 'Mustang Sally,'" and I go, "Sorry, we don't play that." *(laughs)* He goes, "Fine, I'll pay you anyway. Just stop, because that's what we want to hear."

Toody: It was awesome. The hotel was right there, the Jacuzzi, the whole nine yards.

Fred: 400-pound women got on tiny tables and just rocked out while the hunters stood around and looked at 'em. *(laughs)*

MRR: Anywhere you go in Europe they always take good care of you. Why haven't Americans ever adopted that program?

Toody: There's a little more respect for rock 'n' roll musicians as an art form over there.

MRR: It seems that your band is more popular in Europe than over here, which confounds me.

Toody: Well, with this, it's still new enough that we're honestly doing as well here because we've been starting out touring both. With Dead Moon, that was a different thing. We started out touring Europe first.

MRR: Is this a continuation of the same passion?

Toody: Well, yeah.

Fred: Like, this is rock 'n' roll. This is your heart. This is my heart. This is what you see. You don't like it. Deal with it.

Toody: Sure.

Kelly: People in Europe that are older, they've been around for a long time, and that's their life. And they're going to make you comfortable and they're going to put on a good show and they're going to make sure the sound system's really nice. I mean, it's apples and oranges. There's good and bad about both.

Fred: I love the fact that in Europe the parents give the support to the kids that are playing music. Here, it's like, "Well, when you get done with that shit, you'll get a real job." It seems more legitimate. In Europe, being a musician is a valuable job. And the parents are proud of the fact that the kid has got this talent that not everybody on the planet has got. Here, it's put down. You play music and it's like, "*Kid, get real.* You gotta get something that's gonna pay." Rather than the fact that you're actually creating something that's for human posterity.

MRR: Their culture supports the arts.

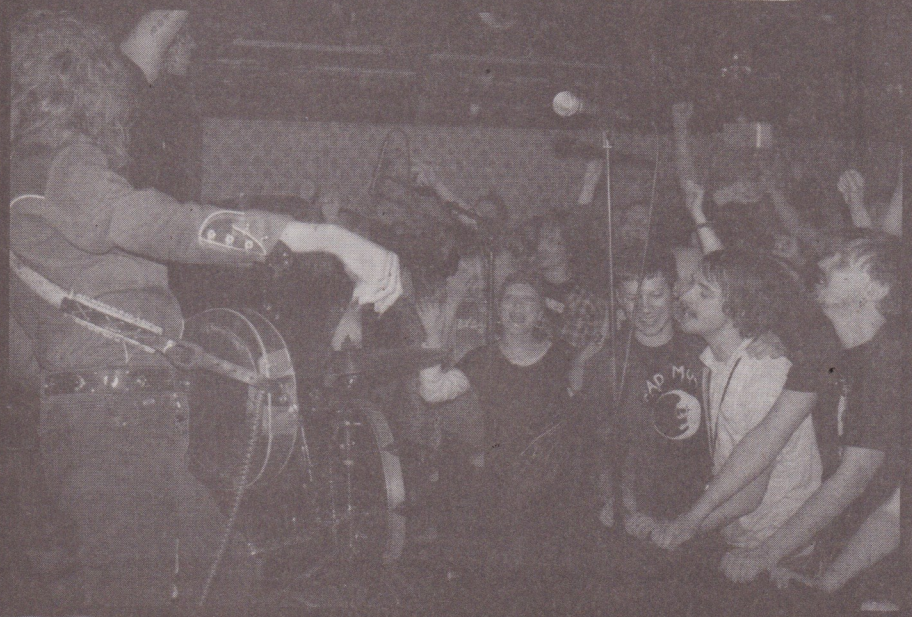
Toody: It makes the same, whether you're a cartoonist, photographer, any art form.

MRR: And the parents say, "If it makes you feel good as a human being, go for it."

Toody: Especially in your youth and young adulthood. To them, part of your education is to travel, to try different skills or things that appeal to you, and figure out what your one thing is—why you were put on the planet, and what you're supposed to do with your life.

MRR: And unfortunately, the parents do not seem that supportive or positive over here.

Fred: What really killed me was that in 1994, they had an interview poll with all these different—I think they took about 100 people from each country or whatever—and love and family had always won over. Second was money and possessions, okay? In 1994, in America, for the first time and the only country, the people that



were interviewed said money and possessions were the most important. And we're still the only ones who think that's more important than love and family.

MRR: And yet we can't figure out why we're miserable, why we're like suffering and stewing in our own juices.

Kelly: That's a huge cultural difference.

MRR: Since you've been to Europe with Dead Moon so many times, and this was your first time as Pierced Arrows, did you get any criticism from anyone? Was anybody really up in arms?

Fred: We expected people to be yelling Dead Moon songs, and nobody ever said anything.

Toody: They were very respectful, and everybody kind of came with the idea of, "Well, let's give 'em a chance and see what they're up to." Instead of, "I'm furious, I'm hurt, I'm disappointed, part of my life is gone!"

Fred: Kelly never got beat down. *(laughs)*

Kelly: I mean, they might in a joking way, but I expected a lot more.

MRR: After 40 years of rock 'n' roll, when you come back to play in the US do you ever wonder why the attendance isn't better?

Toody: It's the same here as ever.

Kelly: We have a pretty good draw in most places.

Toody: Well, we'll see what else is going on when we go out in the US, but in the Northwest especially—and we've been out in California a couple times and this has been happening over the last couple of years—but it's an incredible age trajectory—from ground zero, to this old lady at the bar, to people who are our age.

Fred: Well, some of the people who are coming, I don't think they really give a shit what we're playing. What's amazing to me is that people go, "Yeah, okay..."

MRR: You've played with a million different groups over the years. Do you see a lot of similarities between them, going from back in the '60s, to punks...

Fred: Oh yeah, because I've been writing the same kind of flavor of rhythms...

Toody: ...but you're talking more about the audiences?

MRR: Yeah, do you see differences?

Toody: Different dress, different times, different attitudes, same shit. Everything circles, it doesn't matter what it is. Whether it's social issues or music in general. It was a riot for us when all of a sudden all this retro '60s stuff came back. *(laughter)* All they were playing was the shit we didn't want to hear on the radio then!

Fred: You're like "Hey, those are the clothes I left at the Goodwill."

Toody: But one of the coolest things about getting older is to see that cycle keep going. One of my favorite lines Fred ever wrote was "rattle and shake your political cans, giving directions without any plans." We did it, you're gonna do it, your kids are gonna do it, your grandkids are gonna do it. It's part of the evolution of growing up. How you imagine the world should be, what you make of it, what work will you create, and what it really is. And what part you don't want anything to do with, and what part you embrace or do something about. You just can't do it all.

Fred: And that last important part is the reality check, because...

Toody: ...we're still doing that, forty years after the fact.

Fred: When I was seventeen, I thought if you marched through the street with a black armband, you would be able to stop the war in Vietnam. (*buzzer noise*) Wrong answer. I got a little slap in the face when this big guard from the federal government put me on the ground and his boot on my head, and I go "Okay, I think I understand where you're coming from now," and then you kind of have to rearrange that. Like, you're talking about peaceful protests, Ghandi, anarchy or war in the streets, guess what? Nowhere, fucker, is where it's heading.

MRR: Is there a way to work within the system? Can it go well?

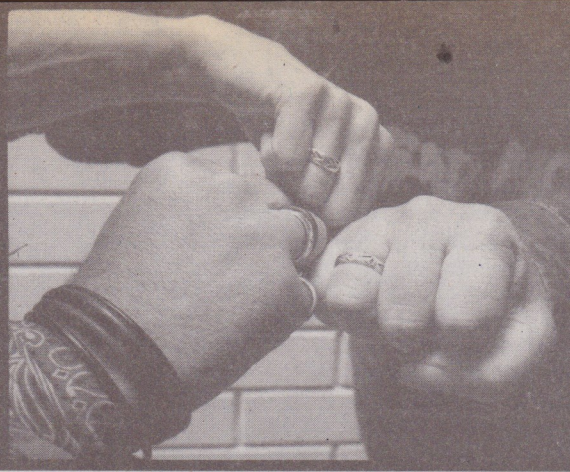
Toody: What it does is it just, starts the ball rolling, that's what I'm talking about. Making your ripple.

Kelly: I mean, it didn't necessarily change things right away, but it definitely ushered in a real cultural shift in America.

Fred: I think you're right. I could've still been sent to Saigon. In the time when that ripple was created, the draft was still operating and I could've been well on my way to dodging those fuckin' bullets.

Kelly: It's like, one pebble in the ocean isn't going to create a tsunami. But if you have thousands and millions of pebbles at the same time, you know what I mean?

Fred: That is a good point. And are we in that place now?



Could we actually influence things now? Because I think we're in the most fascist regime, most conservative...

Toody: ...that's because the pendulum has swung back again. I think there's so much input, and there are so many cool things about the internet, but the one down thing about it is that... It's like a drug. You completely cut yourself off from whatever. Whoever makes any kind of change is 1 to 2% of the population. It's always been like that.

Fred: I would've loved to have been with Hillary Clinton walking into a gas station, going, "Whoa, I didn't realize gas was *this* expensive." *(laughter)*

Toody: It's like you lose touch with reality, and you're in the trenches again.

Kelly: I'm not saying this to blame her or anybody else, but she's out of touch, and most politicians are out of touch.

Fred: All of them.

Toody: And they always will be.

Fred: Do we have the ability to elect a person that will actually do a fuckin' bit of good? I'm a little frustrated.

Kelly: Probably a bit of good, but not enough.

Fred: They're all career politicians, and they only go where money is. Money talks, nobody walks. Doesn't matter if you're black and young, a female from New York—they all answer to that greed.

Toody: And unfortunately, you gotta realize that everyone wants their little piece of the pie, of what they want to get done and what's important to them, and it all costs money. It always has to be in the mix, it's the reality of rock 'n' roll. If you have no business sense, your band is never gonna get out of the basement. Period.

MRR: You were saying, "We make 20K between the two of us per year, but we live on $2,000 a year." Astounding. Fred said, "That gives me 18K to invest in buildings..."

Toody: ...that's why we own shit.

MRR: Lots of punks have lost that inspiration and drive to work hard. You were saying in that interview (in the documentary *Unknown Passage)* that anyone can fuckin' do it.

Fred: Bust your fuckin' ass and do it.

Toody: It needs to be part of your temperament. I mean, Fred and I were lucky...

Fred: ...it's called working hard too, though. It's called hard work.

Toody: We love doing stuff ourselves, love doing it on the cheap. To us, that's the challenge. It's not just being able to get it done, it's being able to get it done *(whispers)* with nothing.

Fred: In LA with the Lollipop Shoppe, we were on this budget. They gave us $40 a week to feed the entire band. That's what Toody had. Basically, running the household out of Laurel Canyon—we're living in this expensive place with $40 a week from Ralph's supermarket, and she would figure out exactly what to buy, and at that point we had two kids with us.

Toody: And a roadie.

Fred: A couple cats, a couple dogs. But it was the whole band and between all of us, $40 a week.

Toody: Probably less than that.

Fred: And we did that religiously, week after week. Spaghetti and pancakes for breakfast...

Kelly: ...maybe we turn this into a recipe book: *Fred and Toody's Poverty Guide. (laughter)*

Fred: Forget the Hamburger Helper

Toody: You make everything from scratch. I got lucky. My mom's from good German peasant stalk, and you just...

Kelly: That's beyond the Top Ramen recipe guide.

MRR: That's what I'm talking about. You've carried on for forty years because you didn't want to play their game.

Toody: If that appeals to you. There are certain people it does and certain people it doesn't. You can make your mark one-way or the other. It's gotta be something that comes naturally to you.

Fred: The whole world couldn't be self-employed, but on the other hand, each person is its own entity. Some people don't like that responsibility. You don't go to work for eight hours, you carry it with you 24/7. Every fucking minute you're worried about if you're gonna go under. I remember the attorney general calling me at some point because I'd just bounced a check...

MRR: You work with that old machine, you're all like hunkered over it. You got your other glasses on... By the way how is that lathe holding up?

Toody: We just found out that we cut the LPs so fast—the old lacquer is too brittle—so it's got a skip in one side. We were literally, just as we left, taking the shrink-wrap off of every LP, seeing if it's got the skip on it—it has to be redone. We literally got that LP back two days before we left. It's a sixty-year-old piece of equipment.

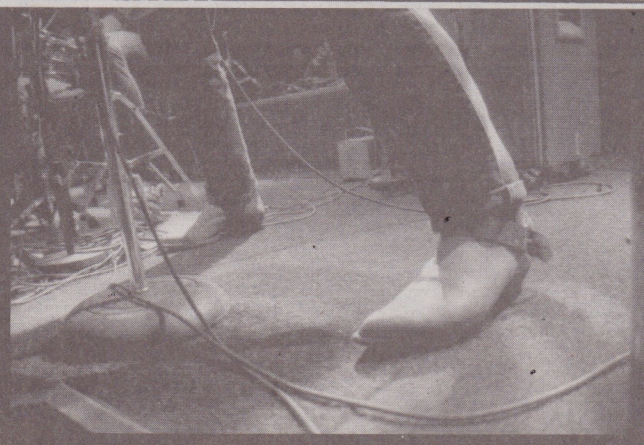
Fred: A lot of people get a negative response from things. My mom used to say, "You cannot sing. You are the worst singer in the world." She loved Frank Sinatra. She took me when I was 15, and I got to see Frank Sinatra sing at Sands and it just blew me away. I thought it was fucking awesome, and I thought, "My god she's right I can't sing, fuck." So what do I do...

Toody: You're a badass singer baby, go for it.

Fred: It was freaky because at that particular point everybody was a smooth pop singer.

MRR: You also pitched your stuff to LA agents and managers, and all those guys were not very receptive.

Fred: No, the first thing I actually did in LA was sing with the guy that did "Boney Maroney," Larry Williams. I came down and he had a small record company at the time over in Watts—El Dorado Records. I came over with



Mike Tell who was promoting all the black acts in Las Vegas, and he was the manager of...

MRR: Deep Soul Cole.

Fred: I used to run around Vegas, and he had a rope around me. He'd drive his car at like six or seven miles an hour, as slow as he could, and I'd be running behind with this rope around me training for these gigs I was doing

Kelly: I think we should try that trick now.

MRR: And you were on the Old Soul Review where you were the only white person?

Fred: Yeah, and it was just insane, I'd go running across all the tops of these theater seats, and jump up on stage and start screaming and crying and throwing a fit. I remember one photo I had to take that they wanted to be a really good clean photo, but they couldn't get this sweaty look out of me, so they threw this bucket of water just as they were snapping the shot to make it look like I was sweating. They had to crop part of the photo because it actually looked like I just pissed myself.

MRR: After you guys went through your former bands—Zipper and the Rats—your outfits got real cutting age.

Fred: I got creative with it

Toody: Portland had a really awesome, creative punk scene, it really did. It was very eclectic. All the bands deviated into almost different genres that kind of all got dumped into the same mode. It was really excellent, with all the diversity of what the bands were up to.

MRR: Somewhere around '75 Toody started playing bass on all the records?

Toody: Well that's when I started playing, period.

MRR: Fred said, "Well there are no fucking good bass players, so what I do I'm gonna train my wife to do it."

Toody: He was sick of the hire'm, fire'm.

MRR: Are you paying her more now? You giving her a little bit more?

Toody: Awww, fifty-fifty, baby.

MRR: Rock's always been a male-dominated field. In the film Toody says you weren't into that peace and love, but you did inspire a lot of women to become rockers...

Toody: It's more about the self-confidence that it gives you, and just having the opportunity to get up on stage. It's been one of the things I least expected I would be doing with my life and one of the great surprises that life throws your way, and for me it just comes natural to just keep doing it. The age thing is never gonna matter to me, and I know that consequently inspires a lot of young girls, which is great to me. I always say, "Thank you, that means a lot, that's so awesome." I know how I've gotten inspired and what you do is you pass it on down baby, pass it on down the line.

MRR: Many women were inspired by you. Does that ever get daunting at times?

Toody: A little bit, but shit, I turned 60 this year. So at this point, it's great to see women doing whatever in rock 'n' roll or whatever field period. It really doesn't matter. The one incredible thing about women is that the older we get we finally get that inner-confidence and that inner-feeling that for a lot of different reasons takes girls and women a little longer to achieve...

MRR: Were there any female musicians that inspired you?

Toody: I always wish I had a chance to meet Janis. Another tomboy, ugly duckling, wallflower. I would have loved to meet her. She was an incredibly strong woman who met a tragic end, and never got satisfied with who she was and what she was doing and never realized the mark she was making.

MRR: I read this interview with her and she was talking about how as she got older she kept waiting to finally get to that place that you are talking about, and she was asking her dad about it, and her dad said something like, "Oh you've discovered the great Saturday night lie." That line has always stayed with me.

Toody: Yep! She grew up in the '50s like I did where your learned expectations were completely different, and I got lucky enough to meet the right man for me at 17/18 years old, which is rare, incredibly rare.

Fred: And boy was I a good guy!

Toody: (*laughs*) That was part of what we grew up with. That was part of your completeness, your fulfillment, and unfortunately she never had that. The other woman that I always completely admired, just for her chutzpah and independence and all the rest of it, was Kate Hepburn. She's always tweaked my grommet, before I even got involved in music or anything else.

MRR: As if she was instantly her own person.

Toody: Yeah, exacty, and beyond that there've been a lot of women who have made their marks in rock 'n' roll one way or another, but I've never felt any affinity to them. I'm a tomboy so, Joan Jett, Pat Benetar...

MRR: Well, what they're doing is more showy.

Toody: Yeah, it's different...

Fred: I don't know why you never wore those wonderbras. (*laughter*)

Toody: Yeah, exactly. I'm not the type to throw in a little blatant sex just to spice it up. If you can't do it without that then forget it, you know. I don't value it.

MRR: Did you have any desire to play music before Fred approached you?

Toody: I always had a desire to get on stage. I always thought it would be acting or some other thing. I never considered that it would be music per se. It's all the same thing—it's communication and getting something across to people, and having that flow, that energy between the audience and the people on stage.

MRR: Fred, weren't you going to Canada to escape the draft and ran out of gas outside of the club where you met Toody? Was it one of those things where you could have easily ended up in Vancouver?

Toody: That's why fate is a beautiful thing.

Fred: It still blows me away to this day.

Toody: It's all what if, what if, what if...

MRR: There's no other rock 'n' roll couple in the entire world that has accomplished this feat. After that many years of marriage, then to be in a band with your lover? Absolutely impossible!

Toody: Easy! Easy!

MRR: You have to be delirious with love.

Toody: It's never been hard. We've grown together, the same values. We've pretty much been together 24/7, with the exception of the few months when Lollipop Shoppe was down in California. I know that wouldn't work for most people, but it does for us.

MRR: You guys just happen to meet the right person, the chances of that are one-in-a-million. You guys are so lucky.

Toody: We realize that we hit the lottery twenty times in a row.

MRR: I was greatly impressed by the new album. I hadn't seen you guys before I heard the record, and I thought, "Dead Moon ended. Are they gonna come back with a whimper"? But you came back pissed and ready to fight. Are any of the new songs reflective of the relationship that ended with Dead Moon?

Toody: Of course.

Fred: I kind of write stuff that has to do with the past and future. It's almost like I feel I have premonitions. I don't half the time know what I'm writing about until a year later. I'll read the lyrics and go, "Oh my god that's what that was about." It's almost that I feel like I'm a fortune-teller.

MRR: Were most of the songs written after Dead Moon or were any of them from before?

Fred: Most of them were written after Dead Moon, but some were written during the last stages of Dead Moon, and then the stuff I am writing right now is just kind of futuristic, I think—the stuff that nobody's heard yet.

MRR: Hey Kelly, are you putting your two cents into these songs?

Kelly: I think when Fred brings up songs, a lot of times he'll come and throw something on the table that's already written and worked out. There are times when we'll change 'em around at practice or we'll argue about them. We've talked about collaborating.

Toody: Which I'm very excited about.

Kelly: When we were in Europe, we talked about that, but since we've been back I haven't had time to sit down with a guitar at all. It's just been non-stop.

Fred: Pierced Arrows is moving three times faster than Dead Moon ever did. A lot more stuff is coming our way than ever happened at the beginning of Dead Moon. We're kind of like, "Woah we need to slow it down a bit," but on the other hand we don't really wanna take twenty years to get established.

MRR: I think what's so inspiring about you guys is that you've done everything on your own terms. How do you maintain that?

Kelly: It's a matter of trying to exist outside of the music industry as much as possible. My background is the DIY punk scene. I think that's one of the places that we come together.

Toody: Common ground.

Kelly: It's great for me to see people that are older than my parents, you know, being in a band with these guys. We have essentially the same values as far as that goes and that's really inspiring and great. It's DIY on a different level.

Fred: No matter who you talk to—whether they're 60 or 80, 85—How do you feel"? I feel the same way I did when I was 18. It's the body that changes.

Toody: I look in the mirror and go, "who is that person looking back at me"? My mother even says that. You still feel the same way on the inside.

Fred: You learn a little bit more, but you're still making mistakes, and you still feel like you haven't achieved half of what you want to achieve in life. I don't think you ever feel that—no matter how old you get, there's always shit that you want to do.

Toody: You'll never learn all you want to learn.

Fred: The coolest thing about it is to see how many generations just keep going by, and you realize that very little actually changes. People are the same here, in Europe, in China. People care about their families. People care about their future...all the values of human nature.

Toody: Bitch about their governments, bitch about taxes...

Fred: So you know that's the greatest thing about getting to the point where you can actually talk to a lot of different people, all age groups, see the world, this and that. The only difference is language, and that's even becoming less of an issue. Most people speak English. People love what they love—they love their music and families. They're trying to get ahead and create a family of their own. They wanna pass on their own ideals. Everybody has their fold. They all get influenced by

other people. It's great that we happen to be an influence for a lot of people out there, but everybody's got to realize that you're an influence to somebody. You may think that, "Fuck I'm just this little squah that's sitting here, and I'm just me, nobody knows me," and then a niece comes up to you and goes, "Oh my god, I read such and such about you." All of a sudden you go, "Well that's really something." And that's the start of it. It goes from there. Once you start realizing what you're doing right now may not mean a whole lot to billions of people, but if it means something to these ten or fifteen people then...

MRR: Well, that's a deeper connection

Toody: Oh, totally.

Fred: Then you're just that little fellow. You're being thrown in the ocean but you are the ruler of your own wave, and that one little ripple that you're creating is gonna start growing.

MRR: How about reissuing the Rats albums?

Toody: We're talkin' about it. We got some feelers out.

MRR: There are a lot of questions about that Zipper record. It looks like Fred put it together with electrical tape.

Toody: We all did, with the whole band. Do you know what it cost to print LP jackets back then? We scored all this blue tape some place, and we put it out on this oak table we had at Whizeagles at the time. The whole band came in, and we spent two or three nights just cuttin' and pasting.

MRR: Were any drugs involved in any of these productions, none of these things sound like they would be possible without mass quantities of drugs.

Fred: The tape ended up straight, that's how you know we didn't...

MRR: That's an angle we need to talk about. Earlier on you said that you didn't respect musicians that were so blotto that they couldn't even play.

Toody: I've been there myself and hated it.

MRR: You criticize 'em, but I am listening to some of that old stuff and thinking there might have been a small lysergic inspiration on some of those takes.

Toody: Fred only took a quarter tab once in his life.

Fred: Actually, Janis gave us that.

Toody: His first and last. He actually had musicians come up to him saying, "Fred, if I knew what you were on naturally, Jesus, I would do it in a heartbeat."

MRR: What about us record geeks that want to get a hold of the Weeds record? I know it's been booted many times.

Toody: A legit reissue came out on Way Back Records out of Europe. It's called the Weeds AKA the Lollipop Shoppe. That's the only one authorized by Fred Cole. The rest are all boots.

MRR: What a fuckin' heartbreaker! The one time that you drove all the way down here saying, "We're gonna fucking open for The Yardbirds," and Bill Graham says, "Who the fuck are you? Get the fuck outta here."

Fred: And that was at the back door of the Fillmore. Our manager claimed he was engaged to Hayley Mills at the time. He claimed she was calling him up at the radio station and was going to come over from England.

MRR: You thought you had it dialed in.

Fred: Boy, I tell you, that was some screwy shit. I just had the guy from Nuggets—the lawyer from Nuggets—he wants to know exactly where I stand with "You Must Be a Witch." I sold all those songs for one dollar, all of the rights—Weeds, Lollipop Shoppe for one dollar!

Toody: It was like, kid, you wanna get a record out? Sign right here.

Fred: They gave me a dollar, and then years later I found out that it was a totally illegal, bogus deal. I went to get my money out of BMI. I signed up as a BMI songwriter—this was about the late '70s/early '80s, somewhere in there... The guy said, "You already got your money. You already came in and got it. It's right here on the record, your signature and everything." I look at it and go, "Man, this isn't me." He goes, "Well your real name is Freddy Colletti, right"? I go, "What are you talking about"? He said "Your real name is Freddy Colletti, and your stage name is Fred Cole. We paid you all your money." I mean you have got to be fucking kidding me! So since then I have been trying to find out about this guy in New York City who went into BMI and claimed he was Fred Cole. His real name was Freddy Colletti, and he got all my money for the song writing.

Toody: Well, you wouldn't have gotten it anyway because Davison had it.

MRR: How much did he get?

Fred: I have no clue! They won't tell us. They say that right now I have money sitting there because, obviously, Freddy Colletti hasn't been around.

Toody: They can't prove that he's the Fred Cole that wrote the song—he's just Fred Cole who sung it on the album!

MRR: Your movie soundtrack got reissued too, *The Angels from Hell*. You never saw any money from that either, huh?

Fred: No. They refused to have me in the movie because I would have had to join the actor's guild. They would have had to pay me as an actor because I was the lead singer and actually had a line.

Toody: It was considered a speaking role, so they would have had to pay him more money.

Fred: You can see my arms sticking out in parts of the movie.

Toody: You never see his face.

MRR: It's a biker exploitation movie?

Toody: Oh totally, yeah, yeah, yeah.

Fred: We spent 13 days in Bakersfield, and spent $1300 dollars in room service.

Toody: And you wonder why they were pissed!

MRR: I bet that went along way in fuckin' Bakersfield.

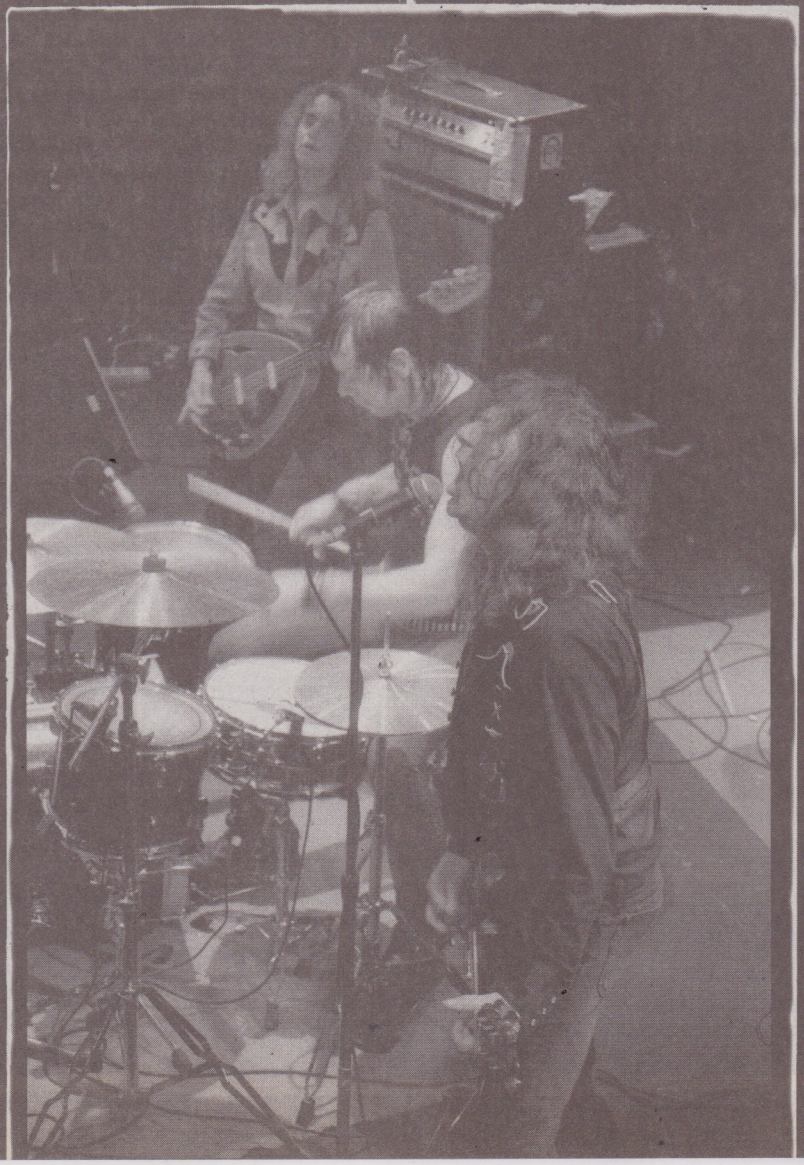
Toody: That was a shitload in those days.

Fred: We were ordering Margaritas and shrimp cocktails...

Toody: There were five of them and they were equally decadent!

MRR: In those days, Lollipop Shoppe was opening for people like The Doors and Steppenwolf?

Fred: Well, we got established at



the same time as them.

Toody: They played a bunch of gigs with Sparrow who became Steppenwolf. They started at the same time.

Fred: There was a dive bar called The Matrix in San Francisco. Us and Sparrow used to play up there. We used to play the Ark in Sausalito—we were the house band there. Who was the band we used to play with all the time?

Toody: Moby Grape?

Fred: Moby Grape. They were way better than the Doors. They were a great live band. We played over 40 gigs with Moby Grape in one year. They were totally killer—loved those guys. They would come in every night and jam with us. That was at the Ark. It was a little fucking boat, and we were living up in the second part of that thing. When we first came down we were living at the Hell's Angels camp that was over in San Rafael because our manager was an ex-Hell's Angel. Whitey Davis.

Toody: He was quite a character. He was the original punk rocker. He was it. I got a chance to see Moby Grape a few times in L.A. They were great!

MRR: What do you feel like playing with these guys Kelly? Young and good looking?

Kelly: Hey, it's great to feel young at 37.

MRR: What's in store for Pierced Arrows?

Toody: A lot of touring, a lot of road work...The fact that Kelly's got the energy—he's a road dog like we are. He loves the road, loves playing live in front of people. It's what we're all about.

Kelly: More songs, more records.

Toody: We're gonna start working towards a second L.P. We'll see how long it takes, see what comes down the road.

MRR: Are we gonna hear some of those new songs tonight?

Kelly: A couple new songs.

MRR: You've got a challenge in front of you—two of the rocking-est human beings on the entire planet, and you've got to step up to the plate.

Toody: Ah, it's easy for him. It ain't a problem. To me the coolest thing about Kelly is that he is a bass player who had the courage to say, "Drums? Why not, I'll give it a shot." Fuckin' love that. He's got his own unique style. It fits completely with what we're about. I love it.

MRR: There's not that many really good garage, psychedelic kind of punk bands right now.

Toody: You gotta get to Portland more often, baby! You gotta get outta this town!

MRR: Who should we go see?

Kelly: You should go see November Witch from Olympia. The singer of November Witch designed our album cover. The Riffs haven't been around for a while but their new band, the Nice Boys are really good. We played with them a bunch of times.

Toody: They're a Portland band.

MRR: What about Dead Section?

Kelly: Dead Section is completely amazing. Tony Bartek is a complete lunatic. Portland has an amazing scene across the board. Burning Leather...Lebenden Toten.

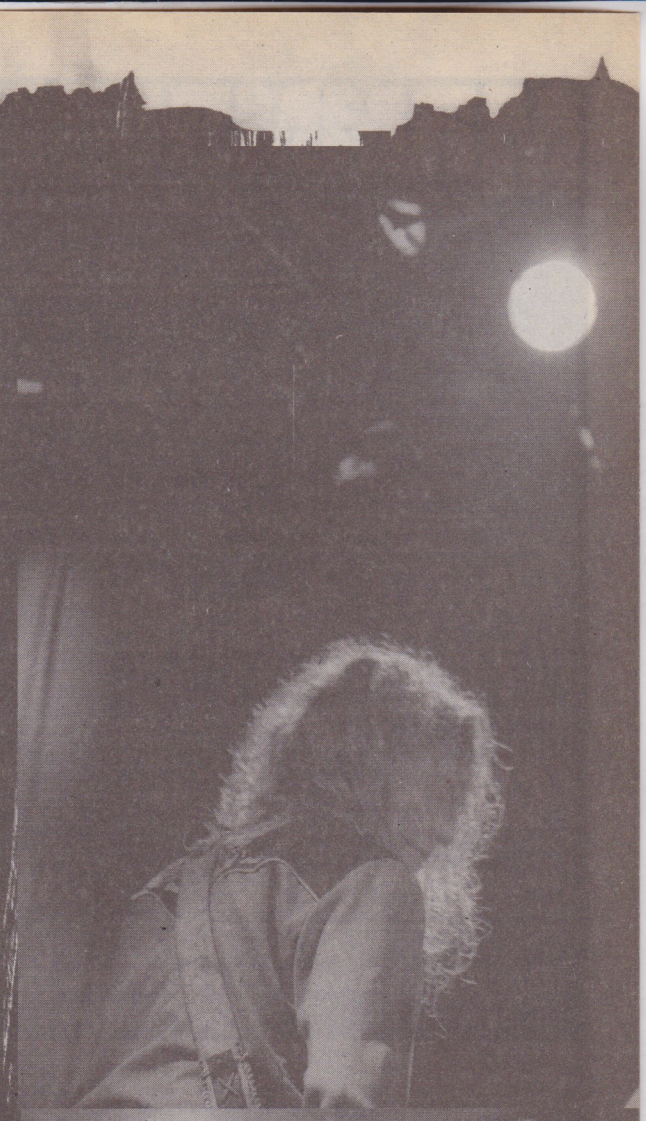
Toody: To me any band out there that's a punk band, that's got that energy, the intensity, the passion...it doesn't matter what they sound like.

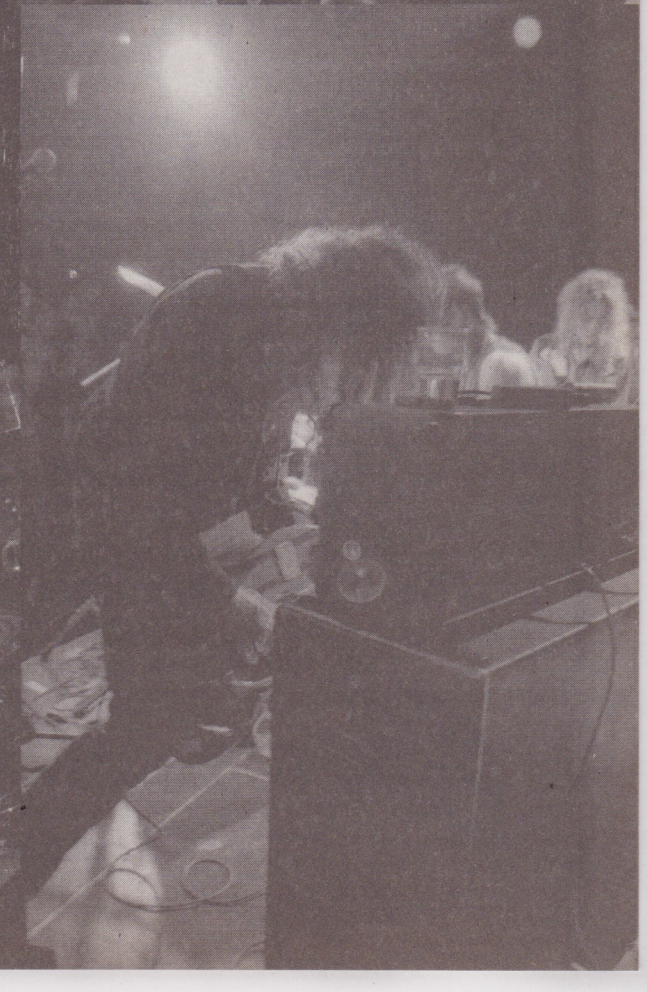
MRR: Music is a certain energy or feeling rather than a particular sound.

Toody: Exactly.

MRR: Thank you so much for the interview.

Toody: Thank *you.*





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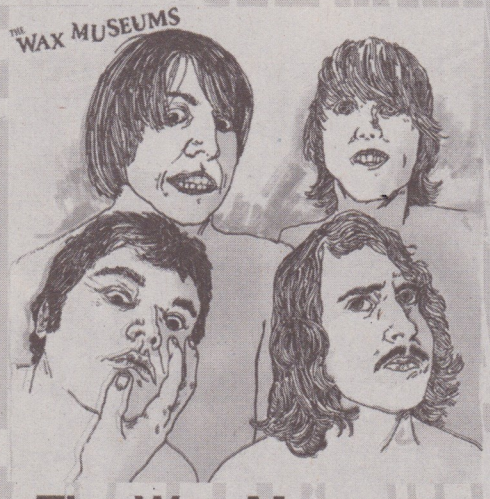

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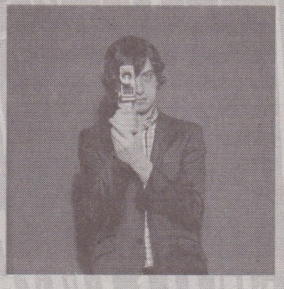

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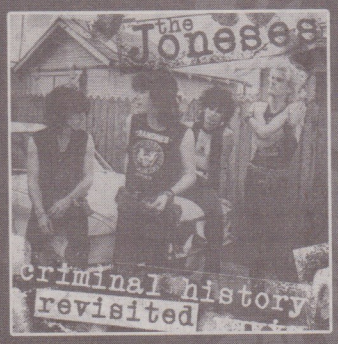

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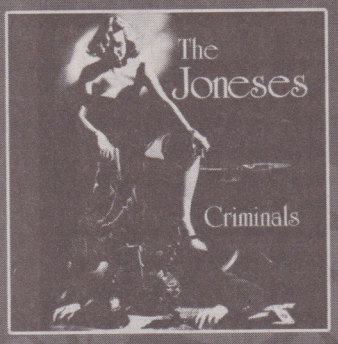

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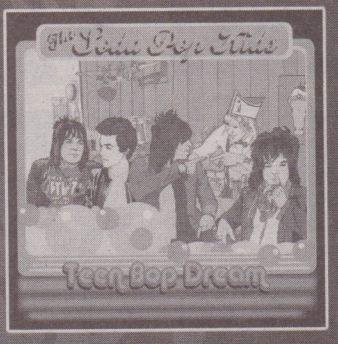

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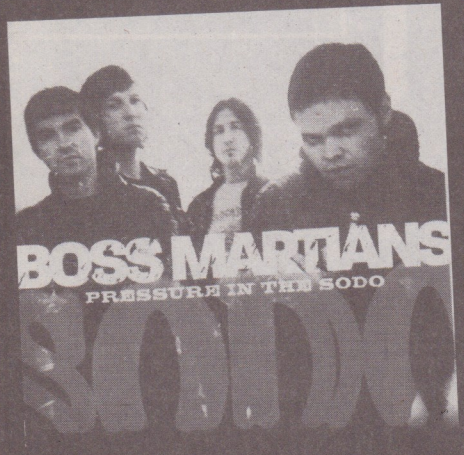

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CONDEMNED TO LIVE IN FEAR

THE STORY OF LEGION OF PARASITES

BY LANCE HAHN

Legion of Parasites was a thrash band. From the first note on the 1984 debut 12" *Undesirable Guests* up through their dubious third and final *Dawn to Dust* LP, the band was unrelenting.

Legion Of Parasites in *Fight Back* fanzine #3: "I would class us as a thrash band. What we feel at the time."

Formed in the little village of Pavenham, north of Bedford, founding members were Cian on vocals and guitar and Wag on drums. The two practiced and wrote songs together for some time before being joined by Sean who took over the guitar and Scott joined on bass. The group soon got together a demo tape.

Legion Of Parasites in *Eroded Freedom* fanzine: "When a ten-song set was put together, a demo tape was recorded at Hero Studios in Luton. The recording was bad and quite rightly called *Another Disaster*."

Without much of a local scene, the group began playing live.

Legion Of Parasites in *Eroded Freedom*: "The next big(ish) thing to happen was a gig in Sharnbrook. The gig went well, people danced and enjoyed themselves. It was nice to see them actually get up off their arses."

At that point, Cian asked friend, and Parasite fan, Gibbo to join. A few months later, the five-piece, dual guitar Legion of Parasites made their debut at the Bedford Boys Club with Government Lies.

With the more practiced and substantial lineup, the group went in to record a second demo that would be more representative of what they were up to.

Legion Of Parasites in *Eroded Freedom*, "Two months later we went to Rocksnake Studios in Rushden for a five-song demo. Produced by Junior of Government Lies, the demo was fast and powerful."

Despite having no regular venue to play, the group struggled on until Conflict picked them up to record for their new label, Fight Back. As the second release of this offshoot of Mortarhate, the *Undesirable Guests* 12" was released in 1984.

Six songs of fast thrash, with titles like "Savages," "Eroded Freedom," and "Condemned To Live In Fear," they also seemed to tow the same party line as their label benefactors.

Legion Of Parasites in *Fight Back* #3: "Our songs are mostly about nuclear war. But there are some about the system, police, and other things that annoy us."

While very much so a second-generation band in the anarcho scene, even talk about deep politics was becoming superfluous, with previous ideals giving way to signs of cynicism.

Legion Of Parasites in *Fight Back*, "We don't call ourselves anarchist. But we believe in self-rule, no government, freedom if we could get it."

With the help of that record, the group got more interesting opening spots on gigs.

Legion Of Parasites in *Fight Back*: "We're hoping to do some gigs soon. Some of the bands we have supported are Subhumans, Antisect, Instigators, Broken Bones, Varukers, Black Mass, Sears."

By the time the record was released, the group had moved on and had learned almost an entire new set of music.

Legion Of Parasites in *Fight Back*, "Our newer stuff is much better. We should be recording something else very soon."

Released on Thrash Records, the group released a full-length in 1985 called *The Prison of Life*. With a cleaner sound, the pace never slowed with the vocal getting rougher. With more than 14 tracks, the group painted a grim image with songs like "Death in the City," "Sea of Desecration," and "Dying World." But a lot of the imagery came out of their influences.

Legion Of Parasites in *Fight Back*: "Me and Sean listen to a lot of foreign stuff as well as fast British bands. Wag is really into Antisect and plays their LP and live tapes all the time."

With that much material released in a year's time, the group focused on new material while playing live gigs all across the country. Of course, the occasional disaster still happened from time to time.

Legion Of Parasites in *HAGL* fanzine #8: "Karma Sutra organized a coach to take all three bands up to Gateshead. It was a 24-seater which was going to cost 240 pounds: 13 [people] in the bands left 11 people paying 10 quid to come, which left 130 pounds needed for playing the gig. Karma Sutra's guitarist got nicked for smashing up a Rolls Royce and had to go to see the pigs. The coach company pulled out, which would have meant an extra 40 pounds for two vans, plus drivers, which added up to 280 pounds. There would have been no room to take people because of us and equipment."

Never entirely part of the anarcho scene, Legions of Parasites seemed more connected with the drunk-punk thrash groups of the time.

Legion Of Parasites in *HAGL*: "I like Disorder's music and lyrics. Crass were good but I don't bother to listen to what they are saying on their new stuff because it's so boring. Up until *Christ the Album* they were very good musically and verbally. But *Yes Sir I Will* did nothing for me 'cos I couldn't bear to listen to it. I think Crass are still popular because they are Crass."

The band had clearly been influenced by outside forces.

Legion Of Parasites in *HAGL*: "We're not influenced by American bands, but we do like a lot of foreign bands like Poison Idea, Depression, and loads others but in the same musical style."

Like many of their peers, the metal influence was becoming more and more pronounced. Their third and final LP, 1987's *Dawn to Dust* on Stud Records, is often thought to have been marred by their attempts in that direction.

Legion Of Parasites in *Fight Back*, "I like Motörhead and Venom as far as heavy goes. A lot of foreign stuff is great."

Soon after, the band split. Wag would end up playing with drunk punkers Sick on the Bus, while singer Cian wound up, in all places, with Fields of the Nephilim.

DOUBLE THINK:

THE STORY OF REALITY CONTROL

BY LANCE HAHN

The cautionary tale of George Orwell's *1984* and its varied interpretations loomed large over punk rock from the Clash's first 7" ("1977" being a countdown) through post-punk movements like hardcore. "Reality control," as the first form of critical media analysis, was a way of keeping the masses in line by feeding them a fictional world mediating everything from their lifestyle and work routine to their belief system. In essence, it's what is accepted today as "spin."

The exhilarating paranoia of the time (and the "reality" that supported it) made *1984* a perfect analysis of both the post-capitalist West and the dystopian East. With both critiques equally bolstering the anarchist line, it's no surprise that the book would become punk's literary yin to *A Clockwork Orange*'s yang. Plus, Reality Control sounds like the name of a punk band.

Michael Barlow: "It was the music we listened to and the energy and rawness of the punk ideal that appealed, I suppose. We were all initially influenced by the likes of the Damned, UK Subs, Fall, early Cure, Joy Division, and PIL to name but a few, but listened to quite a broad spectrum of music, from Discharge to the Doors. Thinking back, we were all attracted to an alternative to the mainstream, both in ideas and sound."

Even in one of the furthermost cities of England, not only had punk taken hold, but the many second-generation tribes had also taken foot. The DIY ethic taken to heart, the region was sure to have local bands to meet the needs of a growing scene.

Michael: "Reality Control was formed in Newcastle upon Tyne in 1980 when we were all aged 14 and at school together. We all were very into punk and indie music and the logical progression was to "do it ourselves"!

"We originally lined up as follows: Michael Barlow – vocals, Michael Scott – guitar and backing vocals, Ken Fawcitt – bass, and Paul Ridley – drums. I later added an extra guitar to the lineup, which also allowed Michael S. to share vocal duties."

By 1980, Crass was a well-known band and label in the punk world, having released their second full-length, *Stations of the Crass*, the previous year while encouraging everyone with something to say to put those statements on tape with the first *Bullshit Detector* compilation.

Michael: "Increasingly, we were all listening to Crass and the music produced by bands on theirs and associated labels, which politicized and influenced our views.

This increased political awareness was consequently reflected in our songs, along with our own experiences and viewpoints."

Newcastle was to become one of many safe-havens for traveling like-minded anarcho bands. This cooperative and independent spirit manifested itself in the Gateshead Music Collective.

Michael: "We were also involved with Gateshead Music Collective, who provided much needed rehearsal space and shared equipment. Without them, many bands in the area just wouldn't have existed. The rehearsal space was also a venue, The Station, which we helped in initially putting on gigs for local bands with more nationally known bands."

One of the more enduring efforts of the time, the Gateshead Music Collective continues even today through the Soundroom Community Recording Studio. It was their live venue, The Station, that would host a number of groups from the most current anarchos to the Clash doing a surprise acoustic performance in 1983 (allegedly as a favor to a couple of the collective members who had given Strummer and Simonon a cigarette).

After spending many months working at their craft, maybe not as anxious to hit the stage as other novices of the era, the group began performing live the following year.

Michael: "After much practicing in bedrooms and garages, annoying the hell out people, we played our first gig at a church/community hall in Heaton, Newcastle in April 1981 with two other bands from school. Paul Ridley, our drummer, also played guitar in one of the other bands. It didn't go too badly, playing our own stuff, other than a cover of "Blockbuster" by the Sweet, but our version was more akin to the Cockney Rejects version! Early gigs weren't hugely well attended, but we persevered, learning all the time!"

Somewhat due to their locale, the group gravitated to other like-minded bands.

Michael: "The Alternative from Dunfermline in Scotland and Chumbawamba from Leeds. We were good friends with both these bands and played a number of gigs with them."

Working at their own pace, the band would continue gigging and writing for the next two years. Despite the ample opportunity, it wasn't until 1983 when the band first committed their music to tape.

Michael: "We were fortunate in that when I left school I got a job as a trainee sound engineer in an arts center with an 8-track recording studio. This meant that we could record all our demos there, plus those of the Blood Robots and a few other local bands, as it was affordable and I could do the engineering and production work for free. The center was much cheaper than commercial outfits, as it was publicly funded as a community arts resource. Inevitably, it closed.

"Anyway, we recorded what we thought was our strongest material, which was the bulk of our live set. The title reflected what we saw as people putting on a happy face, no matter what life mainstream society dealt them. We wanted to encourage people to question things instead of blind acceptance."

1983's *The Happy Face* demo is seven songs with a recording quality rivaling many vinyl releases of the era. The tape starts with a riff-driven instrumental interlude lifted straight from Joy Division's "Transmission." The melody of the first track "Forgive Us" is bludgeoned in the next track's thunderous drum intro. "Nice!" is classic punk rock. Not pop and not thrash, the whole set is solid and still energetic.

Released at the start of the year, the demo established the group as a commodity and led to their first vinyl coming out that year. Volume Records released *The Reproduction Of Hate* 7".

Michael: "Volume was the local indie record shop a lot of us used to spend a lot of time in and we sold the *Happy Face* demo from there, which sold very well by all accounts, so I think the owner took note of this and offered us the chance to do an EP. They had also released stuff by other northeast England punky notables such as Total Chaos and The Toy Dolls. They eventually shut down though."

Continuing from where the demo left off, the record is three tracks of noisy and energetic punk that mostly follows its own design with strange guitar progressions while not ever heading into hardcore thrash, which was becoming more and more the norm. Ideologically, it was a response to violence of the times.

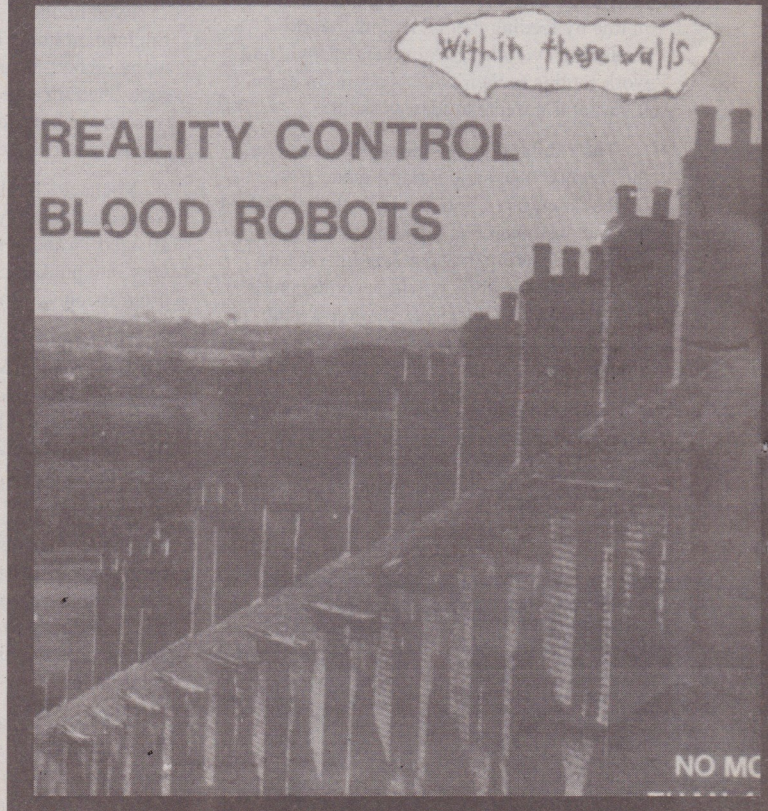
Michael: "It was principally an anti-war record, in particular against the British war with Argentina over the Falkland Islands around 1982. Although we were only 16 at the time, we felt very strongly about not only the futility and horror of war, but in particular the way thousands were sacrificed by Margaret Thatcher in an ultimately successful attempt to whip up a ridiculous nationalistic support for the war, which in turn cynically resulted in her flagging, conservative government being returned to office on the back of it. Not only that, but the jingoistic "our boys"-type support pushed by the British gutter press was particularly objectionable. "

The 7", despite selling out of its pressing, would be the only vinyl release for the group, and the end of their relationship with Volume.

Michael: "Can't really remember what happened with Volume but another record wasn't forthcoming from them or anyone else."

Feeling he had done his part, Ken split from the group amicably and was soon replaced by Carl Craig from the Abductors. The sound was further evolving with Michael Barlow picking up the guitar.

Not slowing down, the band was constantly writing. With their semi-isolation up north, out of town gigs were limited. By the start of 1984 the band was working on their second demo tape. *While*



We Live In Cages was made up of nine new songs. The songwriting was getting more sophisticated with two guitars and two vocals.

Michael: "I think this was our strongest material, mixing a quite powerful sound with a more subtle, lyrical approach. I suppose you could say we'd matured a little, even though we were only 18 at the time!"

Starting with a live recording of "The Sun Shines" and joined by a sample with "Hell Farm," the group introduced animal rights as a new topic of discussion. The nature of the band name was also explained and explored in "Double Think."

With even stronger recording quality, the band was in a situation where the tapes were selling competitively with the vinyl.

Michael: "This was the way in which most bands were heard. Some would even just release live or practice tapes in order to help gain an audience. It must be remembered that most people at the time were either young or unemployed or both, so money was tight and it was a cheap way to get your music (and what you had to say) heard. If you could save for studio time, all the better! Cassettes would be bought and exchanged through the post and at gigs in Britain as a whole. It was a vibrant time and a strong part of the punk DIY culture along with fanzines, which would review them and spread the word."

Ironically, 1984 would be the band's busiest year. Their track "The War Is Over – But Has It Been Won" would appear on Crass Records' third and final *Bullshit Detector* compilation.

Michael: "I really can't remember the details at all, I think we'd sent them our first demo and they must have come across it when putting together tracks for *Bullshit Detector* three. I think it certainly increased the amount of mail we received, especially from overseas. Other than that, my memory fails me!"

That appearance was followed by *Within These Walls*, a split flexi-disc release with Blood Robots.

Michael: "We went to the same school as the two founding members of the band, (Sned and Hec). Although they were a couple of years older than us, (a big deal when you're at school) we become good friends with them due to a common interest in music and politics, and a fairly wicked sense of humor! As we formed bands, it became inevitable that we would do a lot of local gigs with the Blood Robots. We were also involved in a fanzine with some of them (*Stepping Out*). "

For a period, flexi discs were a cheap way for groups to get the word out as represented by Crass' quick response to the start of the Falklands war with *Sheep Farming*.

Michael: "That came down purely to finance I'm afraid – we wanted to put it on "proper" vinyl, but as we funded it all ourselves we just couldn't stretch to that, so a flexi was the best we could do!"

The band was also playing out a lot during this time period.

Michael: "We did a couple of tours—one with the Alternative, and another with Chumbawamba and a band from London (I think) called No Defences. We also did a two-date stint in Belfast with the Alternative, not sure if you could call that a tour, but we did spend a lot of time in a mini-bus"!

It was at this point that Rid left. Drumming duties were soon picked up by Alistair. This new lineup recorded a third and final demo, mostly made up of new versions of older tracks like "Tears of Blood" and "Sugar and Spice." The five-song tape, despite great recording quality, was never to be made public.

Michael: "We just didn't get 'round to it for a number of reasons. There was uncertainty drummer-wise, and we were moving on musically, plus we were hoping to be offered the chance to release something else on vinyl, which never materialized. So I think all these reasons culminated in our not releasing it."

That drummer uncertainty was proven true at the start of 1985 with Alistair leaving to be replaced by Murphy, who had recently left the Alternative. That year the group managed to pop up on an American compilation record with Blood Robots, Political Asylum, Oi Polloi, Legendary Pink Dots, and more.

Michael: "I think it came about from me writing to the guy who put it together. He had written for a copy of the *Cages* demo and later asked if he could put a couple of tracks on the compilation. I can't remember being offered any other vinyl compilations, but I'm sure we were on one or two compilation tapes."

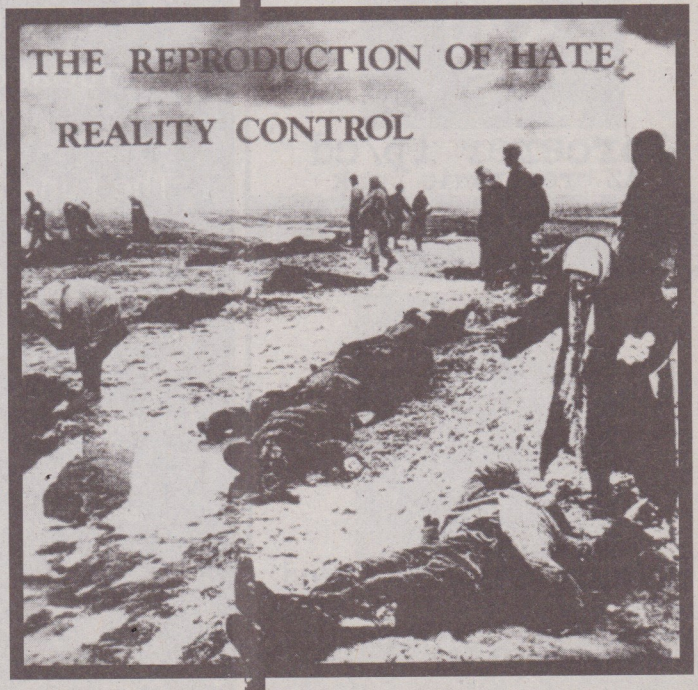
But after one final tour, the band split up entirely.

Michael: "We toured with Chumbawamba and No Defences in late 1985 and played our last ever gig on this tour at Nottingham Narrowboat on October 10, after which we kind of fizzled out and Reality Control was no more. No specific reason. I think in hindsight we were just growing a bit older and getting into different things and the band came to its natural end. Also, Carl and Murphy were living in Scotland, which made practicing less frequent and more difficult, so perhaps the desire waned a bit."

Initially leaving the area for the most part, Michael maintained his ideological connection though none of the members would participate musically.

Michael: "We crammed a lot into four years, both in terms of our lives and the band. Only regret was that we couldn't release more on vinyl, as I think we had something a little bit different to offer and that might have gotten us to a wider audience. We traveled a lot and met some great people, the whole thing was a great experience I wouldn't have missed for the world!

"Again, it was an experience that both politicized and enthused me. Yes, there was some crap produced but there was also a lot of good music from a lot of honest people doing what they believed in. Okay, we were young and naïve to think we could change the world, but I think at least some of the values will have stayed with a lot of people in one way or another. Ultimately, it was about being a good human being. I know I still try!"



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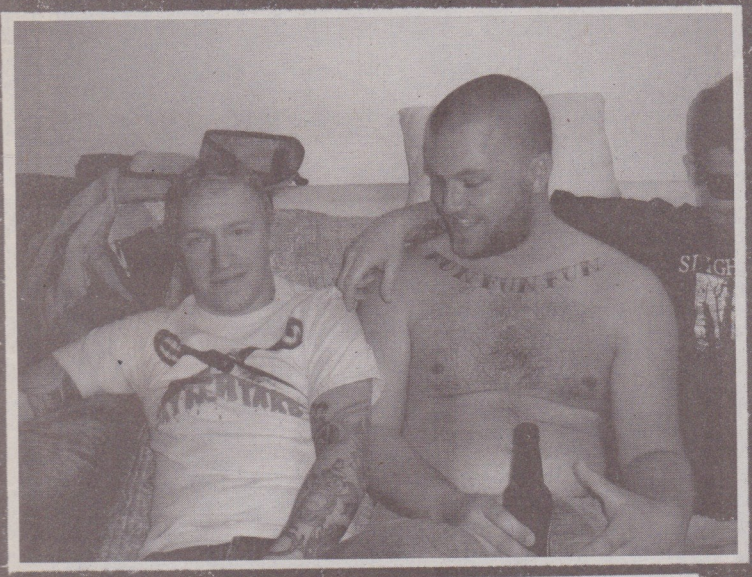

photo: Mike Riley

Deep Sleep are a punk rock band out of Baltimore, MD. Pure and simple. They've all done time in countless bands before this but that's not important. What's important is what these four nerds are doing here and now. See for yourself...
Interview by Mike Riley.

MRR: Everybody introduce yourselves.
Mike: I am Mike. I play bass.
Darick: Darick. I play drums.
Nick: I'm Tony. I'm the singer.
Tony: I'm Nick Vance. I play guitar and do drugs. This is for *Alternative Press*, right? Just making sure.

MRR: Let's start with the basics. How did the band come together and how did you get to your current line up?
Nick: Well, I got out of rehab...
[laughter]
Tony: The band got together because Never Enough broke up. Nick had joined the very last line up of Never Enough and towards the end of that band we were doing a bunch of more punk covers in the set, like Dead Boys and Agent Orange, and towards the end it started to seem like it was more fun to play those covers than to play the Never Enough songs. So when that band ran it's course it just seemed like a fun thing to do a punk rock band and that's how Deep Sleep came about. We got Lee Ashlin, who played in the Fuses, and our friend Mike, from Greasegun, with Nick, and we came together that way. We played for about a year and then we recorded the first 7" and that came out about six months later, and then it all kinda fell apart because Nick wanted to move away, but then Nick couldn't move away because the law told him so, so we decided to continue to play but then Lee decided that he, quote "didn't want to play fast music", so Lee quit and then Mike quit shortly after that when he just didn't show up for a show. Then we got a fill in drummer, Eric Fauver from the Fishnet Stalkers, Daybreak, and currently Final Conflict...we're just trying to grab whatever Pusmort/crust cred we can get from that...and we played a show as a three piece and it was pretty terrible, and then we got Darick Sater and Mike Stearns, of the current line up, from the Spark, and started practicing and playing shows right away and then those guys smoked enough weed to write the 2nd record that just came out. That's the band.

MRR: Do you feel like the song writing changed with the new line up compared to the first 7"?
Nick: It's gotten way better. I love having these guys in the band.
Mike: For the most part it's still Nick coming up with the basic ideas for the song and we just contribute with the arrangements. We had to get the recording started in a hurry because Darick was planning on moving to California, so we recorded the drum tracks in a rush before he left, but luckily it came out pretty good.
Darick: I pretty much laid down the drums from sketches of the songs right before I left and then the rest of the guys completed the songs from that.

MRR: Would you say that, going from the first to the second EP, that you were going for anything different?
Nick: I think that as far as writing the music is concerned the four of us are definitely on more of the same page as compared to the old line up.
Tony: I think the new record is naturally a bit more poppy since we're all huge All and Cruz Records fans.

MRR: Was that intentional or did it just happen naturally?
Darick: I'm not afraid to admit my obsession with Bill Stevenson and listening to Black Flag and Descendents and surf music, and that's basically where I copped my style from. Everybody in the band is into that stuff so it's kind of exciting to take the hardcore influence into that catchier direction.

MRR: Tony, lyrically you tend to cover the ground of the outcast misanthrope. Is that what comes out of you naturally these days or is it an attempt to focus on a genre style or anything like that?
Tony: It comes from my normal day to day life. I know that those things are punk rock cliches, right out of the book, but unfortunately for me, sadly, it's completely 100% legitimate. I wish I was not like that but that's just what comes out of me. I do not get along with most people. I do not like being social. My bandmates, my girlfriend, and the people that come to the record store are the only social interactions that I have positive thoughts about. Every other social interaction I have feels awful and forced, like bad acting. There's no way to talk about this that doesn't sound cliche and that sucks, but I literally punched the windshield out of my car two weeks ago, ya know?
Mike: It does sound like a punk rock cliche but that's why we all got into punk rock in the first place, because we don't fit in anywhere else.

MRR: What are the things that get you guys stoked on life on a day to day basis?
Mike: Music, records, being able to create something. Just taking all that negative energy and being able to put it into something positive, even if it's just learning some dumb ass song about hating everyone. If it wasn't for music I'd be into drugs or worse and it's punk rock and music in general that keeps me from delving into all that crap.
Darick: I don't like living with my parents. I despise my job. I hate paying for gas...there's a lot of shit I don't like, but I can get together with a group of people and write songs and create something and it makes me feel so much better.
Tony: Most of the things that make me stoked on life are pretty solitary pursuits. I like to listen to records in my room. I like to read comic books in my room.
Darick: All the shit that makes me feel good, the reason we do all this, is a throw back to the things that influenced us. I want to participate and put something back in to something I've taken so much from.
Nick: As cliche as it sounds, it's the records I grew up listening to that helped me get by and this band is me giving something back.
Mike: I don't know how to do anything else. I didn't go to college. I don't want to be a lawyer or a doctor. I don't have those ambitions. Both my parents were fucking drug addicts. If I didn't accidentally stumble across punk rock I'd probably be dead. I happened across a book about Nirvana that mentioned Black Flag so I bought Damaged when I was fourteen and from there it was like, 'OK, I'm gonna make music because if they can do it, I can do it'. If it wasn't for that, who knows. I'm not that particularly smart, I can't do anything with my hands, I'm not good at sports. If it wasn't for, 'Oh, I can put three chords together and scream about how pissed off I am'...fuck, who knows what I'd be doing.

MRR: Do you guys want to talk about your other outlets outside of Deep Sleep? Tony has the store (Celebrated Summer Records), Mike and Darick have the label (Wallride Records), Nick's got drugs [laughter].
Mike: I pretty much play music all the time. I work full time at a grocery store and it pays the bills and let's me play as many shows as I want. I have a bunch of bands right now: Deep Sleep, Active Sac, Head Home, the Jons...that's pretty much all I do with my free time. I'm not a particularly social person. I don't like parties...
MRR: They avoid the truth?
Mike: They do indeed. I've never been good at anything else besides playing the guitar or bass. Between that and putting out records with Darick, that's all I do.

photo: Katie Dance

Darick: I can't help but to feel like I'm this old grouchy dude. Even in high school when I met Mike, but I got into stuff like Dischord and SST and Touch and Go and all that music and since then that's all I've wanted to do. I dropped everything to play music. I didn't even have a drumset but I had a band where I was the drummer, but I was so determined to play music that I made it happen. Wallride Records comes from that same passion.
Mike: I feel like we've proven at this point at our lives that we can't function without musical instruments.
Tony: The exception to my anti-socialness is that I have a record store that's the size of a bedroom and I love it and I love the people that come in there and I love talking to them about records all day. That keeps me really, really, really excited. It keeps me from devolving into 100% isolation. Those guys were talking about giving something back...in Deep Sleep I'm just an idiot with a microphone, but with Celebrated Summer Records I feel like I give a little back. It's out in the county so it's accessible to the younger kids that can't come into the city and if I can sell them a copy of Damaged or whatever and I can help to jump start the cool local bands of tomorrow, that makes me feel really good.
Nick: Pretty much all I do is work seven days a week so I can pay all my bills and have money leftover to go spend at Tony's store.
[laughter]

MRR: Do your jobs or the store keep you tied down to Baltimore or will there be any touring in the future?
Nick: Being on probation keeps me tied down to Baltimore, but afterwards there will hopefully be lots of playing out town. That stuff is over next month so we'll see what happens.
Tony: I think that a full US tour is beyond us due to our obligations at home, but we'd like to play out a lot more often once we can. I know we'd like to go to Europe eventually. We'd love to go to Japan, but then again, who doesn't want to go to those places?
Mike: Maybe it's because I was younger at the time and had less responsibility, or maybe it's because gas was cheaper but it feels like it was easier when the Spark was around to tour for two weeks at a time.
MRR: Well yeah, but that's also probably why I'm 32 years old now, still touring in bands, and still broke as shit.
Mike: Granted I was living with my parents at the time but right now I really can't afford to take a week out of work with no pay and not come home with any money to pay my bills. It sucks that money keeps us landlocked, but $4 gallons of gas plus rent and bills...it adds up. Not to say that it's all about the money, because it's not, but...
MRR: The fact that punk rock economics hasn't changed all that much in 25 years doesn't help. People still complain about anything more than a $5 show.
Mike: It sucks that it's getting harder and harder for a band to even cover gas money from shows.
Darick: There's way too many bands now. Not every band needs to go on tour. I don't want to go out and tour until I feel like we're up to par and can put on a really good show. I don't want to waste anyone's time.
MRR: People don't really take the time to try to present something really solid or worthwhile and they go out and try to tour as soon as possible...and of course, it's fun as shit to go out and tour...but people don't think about the fact that it might be more worthwhile to wait until you're asked to come and play a town rather than force yourselves on promoters. There's nothing worse than being out on tour and then playing a show with another touring band that can't even play their songs right.

photo: Manny Mares

Mike: It's really a double-edged sword because part of the beauty of punk rock is that anybody can do it...
MRR: But that doesn't mean that everybody should do it. I feel like Felix Havoc right now.
Mike: Exactly, but then you feel like a dick telling some band that they shouldn't tour because they're not ready.
Tony: The thing is that some of my favorite bands of all time weren't all that proficient, but they're still amazing.
MRR: But those bands weren't trying to go out on tour all the time at that time.

MRR: In the early 2000s you had the thrash revival with bands like What Happens Next? and Tear It Up, and now the hardcore/punk schtick is the late 70s/early 80s revival bands, like a lot of the ones on No Way Records, Grave Mistake Records, Fashionable Idiots...you have two 7"s out on Grave Mistake, do you feel like that's your niche? Do you feel like that's even a fair assessment of these bands or are they just current bands playing hc/punk?
Tony: I think we're trying to bring back the Cruz Records sound. We want to do splits with Big Drill Car. No, I think they're just hardcore/punk bands. To sell something everything needs to be categorized. A distro listing can't just say "they're a hardcore/punk" band. You need a little something more descriptive so "late 70s" and "early 80s" and terms like that get used.
Darick: Everything needs to have a label so you can get the record out of your bedroom, but bands will always have their influences. Some bands do it really well and somewhat unique, and some bands are just ripping off whatever's cool.

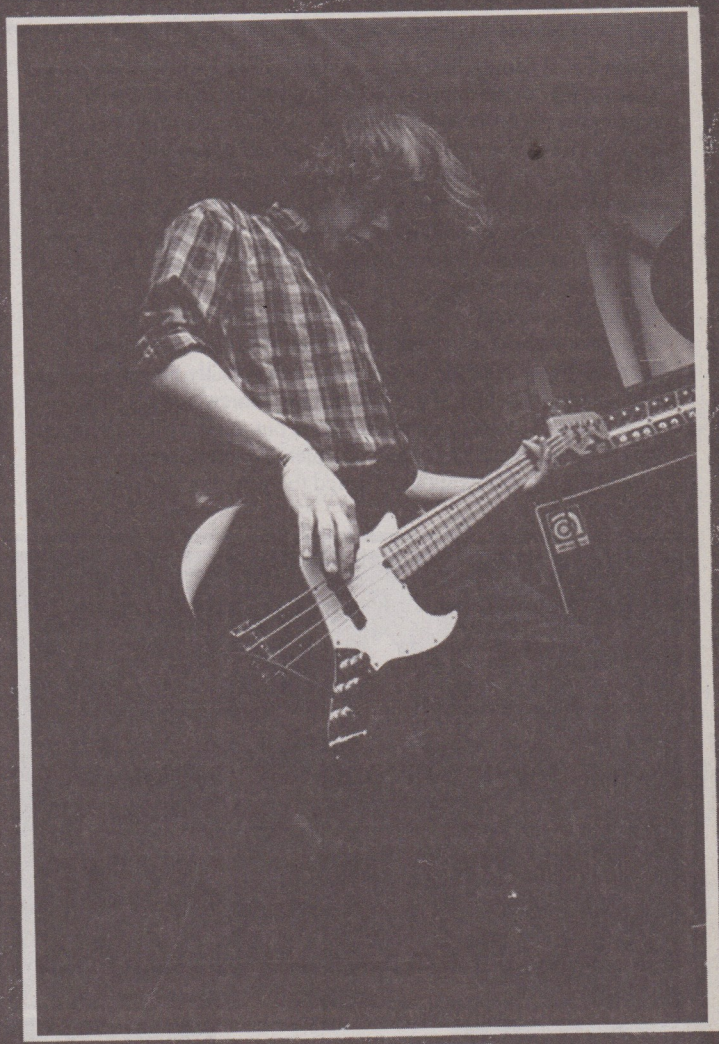

photo: Tony Lynch

MRR: So where would you say you draw most of your influence from?
Nick: All, Descendents, Minutemen, old Cruz Records and SST stuff.
Darick: Black Flag, surf stuff like Link Wray, anything original and creative.

Mike: As far as playing bass, my influence mostly comes from Karl Alvarez, who was the first bass player I ever really paid attention to. I am first and foremost a guitar player and just picked up a bass out of necessity for this band. Playing bass is the most unglorified position in a band that there is. Not to shit on every bass player in the world, but playing bass in a punk rock band is the easiest position there is. I was always into bands like All, Descendents, Minutemen, and even Black Flag where the bass is a crucial part of the band. Those bands had great bass players that did their own thing. That's why I play with my fingers. Chuck Dukowski and Kira were fucking great bass players. And from being into Black Flag and hearing that Greg Ginn's favorite band was the Grateful Dead, I was like, 'no way, that's crazy', but I checked them out and that got me to thinking that maybe I shouldn't just listen to punk rock, there's a million other things out there, so I started listening to soul, reggae, and hip hop where rhythm is more accentuated and that forced me to learn a lot more about the role of the bass in a band. I just try to take that knowledge into my playing in Deep Sleep.
Darick: Tommy Ramone and Bill Stevenson made me realize that playing drums is what I wanted to do.

Tony: SST bands, All, Chemical People, Big Drill Car...I love all those bands, but unfortunately I can't sing like that so my inspiration comes from high energy vocalists. That's what inspires me. Chi Pig of SNFU, that was one of the first shows that I saw where the energy of the singer just floored me. I remember watching him play and thinking, if I am ever in a band and I have just a quarter of the energy of that dude, I'll be happy. If I can't run around like an idiot and rage out than what fun is there in being in a band?
Mike: To backtrack a bit, cuz I was outside pissing, you mentioned the thrash revival and Tear It Up, and if it wasn't for them I'd probably never be in a band that actually played shows. Going to see that band for the first time, somewhere near DC, right before Nothing To Nothing came out, and I was completely blown away. Those guys were complete fucking dorks. They looked like us. Knowing they toured the way they did just totally inspired me.

photo: Katie Dance

MRR: Let's talk about your records and the various pressings. Is that something you welcome or were they just happy accidents? I know some of you guys are into record collecting, how much of that is reflective of the band?
Tony: For the most part the variations are accidental. We had a bum test press, so now we have two different tests, and then Alex (Grave Mistake Records) gets the records but doesn't have the covers yet, but we have shows to play, so then he goes and xeroxes covers, so there's another variation. The first record has gone through three pressings so to differentiate them the covers were different colors.

photo: Katie Dance

Darick: Whatever, we're all record nerds.
Tony: That's true, but we didn't purposefully set out to make anything super limited, those things just happened.

MRR: Do you feel like that's become a selling point for a lot of bands or labels? If they press three or four different versions of a release then the collector types will buy them all so really a pressing of 500 records is only going to maybe 200 people.
Tony: I don't think that there's any legitimate punk/hardcore bands that are doing that these days. The thing that bums me out is that since I run the store I sometimes have trouble getting releases in there because labels are only doing pressings of 200 or so and it sells out in mailorder so I can't get copies.
Darick: With Wallride Records, we like to keep it interesting for us and the people that buy our releases. Since we have the option of doing additional pressings on different colors we do it because it's fun.
Mike: We're not asking anyone to buy the same record twice. That's up to them. If we only do a pressing of 500 records it's not because we want it to be limited and cool, it's because we're broke and we can't afford to do any more than that. Sometimes it's the bands that request the different variations, and that's cool to us because we're into that sort of thing. I think music often takes a back seat to image and fashion more often than the collectibility of the record.
Tony: If someone out there wants to sell me a copy of Descendents - Liveage on blue, I'm ready to pay. I didn't even think that that record existed until I was at Steve Aoki's house on tour with Strike Anywhere and he showed it to me. What's he doing, DJing these days? He doesn't need it now. Steve, if you're reading this, send me that record.

MRR: Baltimore's not known as a real hot spot for hardcore/punk. There's always been some great bands but so few of them ever really got out of town until more recently. How do you feel Baltimore as a city, as well as it's music scene, has influenced you guys?
Mike: I'll let you guys talk first cuz I think Baltimore is filled with the world's biggest assholes. I hate everything and everyone about it.

Tony: I've lived my entire life here and I like all different kinds of music. I think Baltimore has frequently been in the shadow of Washington, DC, so that hurts things. I think there's been tons of great bands from Baltimore, especially currently. The hardcore scene is definitely blowing up: Ruiner, Trapped Under Ice, Pulling Teeth are definitely doing well. I'm not really into that whole Wham City scene but that stuff is definitely getting hype these days. I do like the Death Set. Otherwise, the more traditional punk scene has never really broken out of Baltimore,

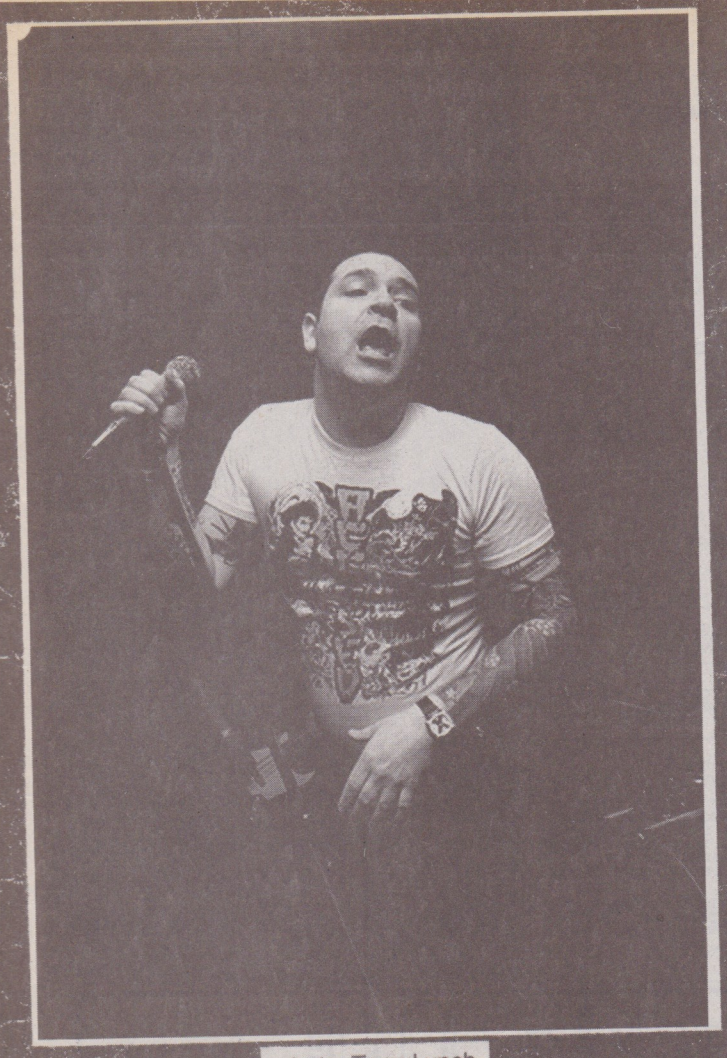

photo: Tony Lynch

besides maybe the Thumbs, even though there's been loads of other great punk bands from here.
Mike: It seems to be all about who you know, how you dress, what drugs you're doing, and who you're fucking.
Tony: Actually, you just described Deep Sleep.
[laughter]
Mike: The bands that are breaking out are really hard working. Ruiner and Pulling Teeth have worked really hard to get what they get. They've earned it. I love Double Dagger and they seem to be getting out there more and more. There's a lot of other bands that we've played with or that I've seen that I think are complete fucking horseshit. They're sloppy, they don't write good songs...they only get what they get because they wear the right clothes and they do coke with everyone else, and everyone loves them. It blows my mind. These bands with dudes wearing jeans so tight it looks like they've spraypainted them on, wearing three belts, when one should certainly do the trick, doing coke upstairs at the Ottobar, and their bands are headlining at Sonar can eat my shit. It blows my mind. I hate it.

MRR: What bands are you stoked on both in and out of Baltimore these days?
Nick: I really like Dead Mechanical a lot.
Mike: I like Dead Mechanical, Double Dagger, Ruiner, Pulling Teeth. I like Hollywood a lot.
Darick: I really like Head Home, Active Sac, even though I used to be the drummer. Hollywood fucking rules. I like the Yolks from Chicago.
Tony: With the record store my job in life is to be up on awesome bands. All the bands that were just mentioned I totally love. Also, Ratsize. There's no way I could be doing the record store if I wasn't completely geeked about tons of bands. I could sit here all day listing tons of bands: garage rock bands, hardcore bands, thrash bands...I could go on all day. That's the most exciting part of my job, trying to track down all these great bands and their records and then turning other people on to them.

MRR: You guys have a pretty rad name, where did that come from?
Tony: Poison Idea.
Nick: It's a Posies song.
Tony: Posies, B-52s, and Poison Idea.
MRR: (wink wink)
Tony: Oh yeah, Mike Riley, you were the one who originally suggested it. I forgot about that.

MRR: Do you guys have anything you want to add or close out with?
Tony: I just want to thank AP for doing this interview. It's fucking awesome.
Mike: Thanks to Mountain Dew AMP.
Tony: I'm just kidding, I know that this is for Punk Rock Confidential.
Mike: I hope I didn't come off sounding like too much of a negative prick.
Tony: So, you guys want to start the Razorcake interview now?.. Our favorite bands are Dillinger Four, Off With Their Heads, the Tim Version...

photo: Manny Mares

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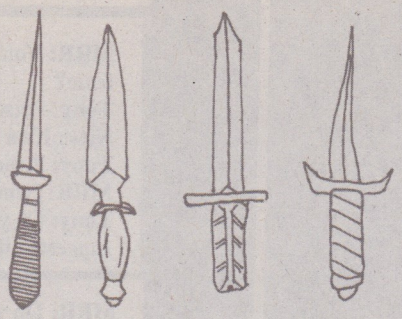

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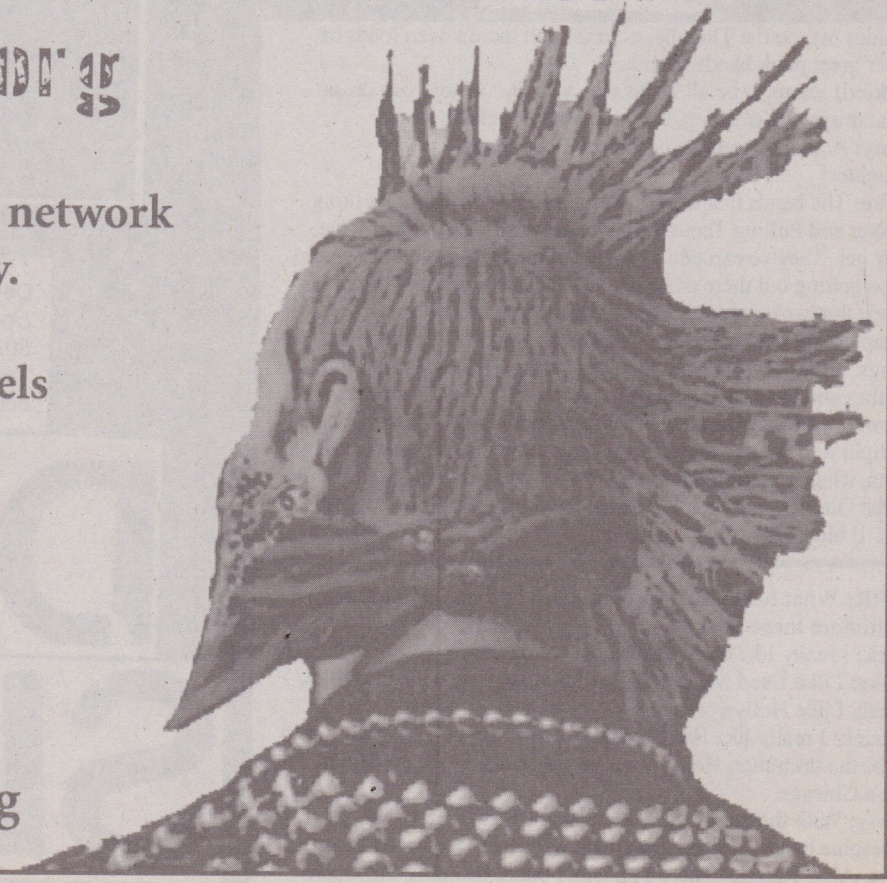

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STATIONS

Stations is a hardcore punk band from Philadelphia. Their noise brings to mind the raging speed of crusty UK hardcore a la Extreme Noise Terror mixed with the stylings of mid-'90s Japanese hardcore like Warhead. Freak music—a soundtrack for killing your landlord or kicking out a cop's teeth. These words were recorded in January 2008. INTERVIEW BY NED WELLS.

MRR: First the basic stuff—history of the band. Why did you choose the name Stations? What do you guys play? How long have you been around?

DEREK: I'm Derek, I play guitar. We've been around approximately four years.

KANE: Vocals.

CHRIS: Bass until January 22nd.

SHAWN: Drums.

MRR: So why the name Stations?

KANE: I think it just started from searching through a whole bunch of other shit and trying to come up with something that could be interpreted in a lot of different ways.

DEREK: To me, the name had a more specific meaning. When I think of the primary tenets of the United States and other countries that are economic superpowers, they are capitalism, government, and power. Government serves the interests of capitalism and not those of the majority constituency. The way that government serves capitalism is through state power. State power in this capacity isn't always force, like Iraq or Colombia for example. I have a strong belief that the 2000 presidential election was stolen through a series of manipulations and aid from special interests—an example of state power not in the form of military strength.

MRR: What are your influences? Musically? Lyrically?

KANE: Lyrically, a lot of it's about anti-capitalism, about our outrage over specific issues.

DEREK: I like a lot of stuff that probably creeps in. The songs I write are definitely influenced by the early Burning Spirits bands. **Deathside** is probably the biggest of them, **Warhead** as well. Lyrically, I don't really extract anything from punk band lyrics, more from things I'm involved in personally, or influential things I've read. There's, of course, the classical anarchist stuff that is an inspiration to me, and more contemporary things having to do with political issues going on like **Greg Palast**, for example. He's this author that wrote a number of books centered on contemporary political issues. His style is really witty, not just like a dry textbook, and he's very insightful into what's going on beyond the surface.

CHRIS: I was a latecomer to the band, so I didn't have a lot to do with the stylistic catalysts of the band, but for me a lot of it is just blowing off steam in a positive way. I mean, I can't go out and shoot people, so it might be better to play music. (*laughs*)

SHAWN: I think when me and Derek started playing, like four years ago, we just wanted to be in a fast band.

MRR: No one in this band is from Philly. Why did you all move here? Would you call Philly an East Coast punk mecca?

KANE: I moved here because I wanted to get the fuck out of the Midwest, and Philadelphia is a reasonable place to live where you can still have access to other cities like NYC, DC, and Boston. It has all the things I'm interested in, like a good punk, activist, and art scene, so I definitely don't regret that decision to move here. I think I'm going to stay for a long time. But that said, too, it's a really fucked up, dirty, aggressive place that just kind of beats the shit out of you and makes you wanna leave. I see a lot of my friends leaving, and that really sucks, but I can totally understand what's making them move.

DEREK: Punk mecca wise, I guess it's relative to your strain of punk—what you're interested in. As far as places I've lived previously, yeah, there is a lot going on. A lot of the people I was close with lived here, and they were the catalysts for my move. Tony Pointless, for example, was a good friend, and I really wanted a change from Chicago. A lot of those people's lives have changed. They're still radical in some way, but really aren't interested in punk anymore. So either people have left for the reasons Kane mentioned or interests have changed. So

for me, it's not really a punk mecca any longer. There are a lot of shows, bands, great record stores, but as far as personal relationships, punk-wise I don't have as many as I did previously. I think it might be on a bit of a change but that's the nature of it, ya know.

SHAWN: I moved here from western Pennsylvania, so my choices were to either move to Pittsburgh, which is pretty much my backyard, or Philly. I decided to do the mindless thing and move wherever my friends were. My band was also here at the time. I don't think Philly is a mecca at all. When I first moved here, there was a punk scene, but it wasn't a hardcore punk scene, more like post-punk, which isn't my thing at all. I think if you like death, negativity, dirtiness, and people being rude, then Philly is definitely a mecca. I don't think any place could really be a mecca. People here are great, but I don't think anywhere is a perfect place. Philly, I think, is definitely the best city on the east coast.

CHRIS: Before I moved here from Atlanta, a lot of bigger bands like **World Burns To Death** would not play my town. I moved here was 'cuz the kids I was playing in a band with, **Otophobia**, relocated here. I'd never lived anywhere besides Atlanta, so it was like, somewhere else? Awesome! And it was an actual city. It wasn't like Asheville or some shit. (*laughs*) I really wanted a change and I got it. Again, things go back and forth. People, scenes, and styles change, but more bands come through here than a lot of places in the country. It'll never be off the map so long as there are places to play, which is always kind of a problem as there are so many bands touring these days.

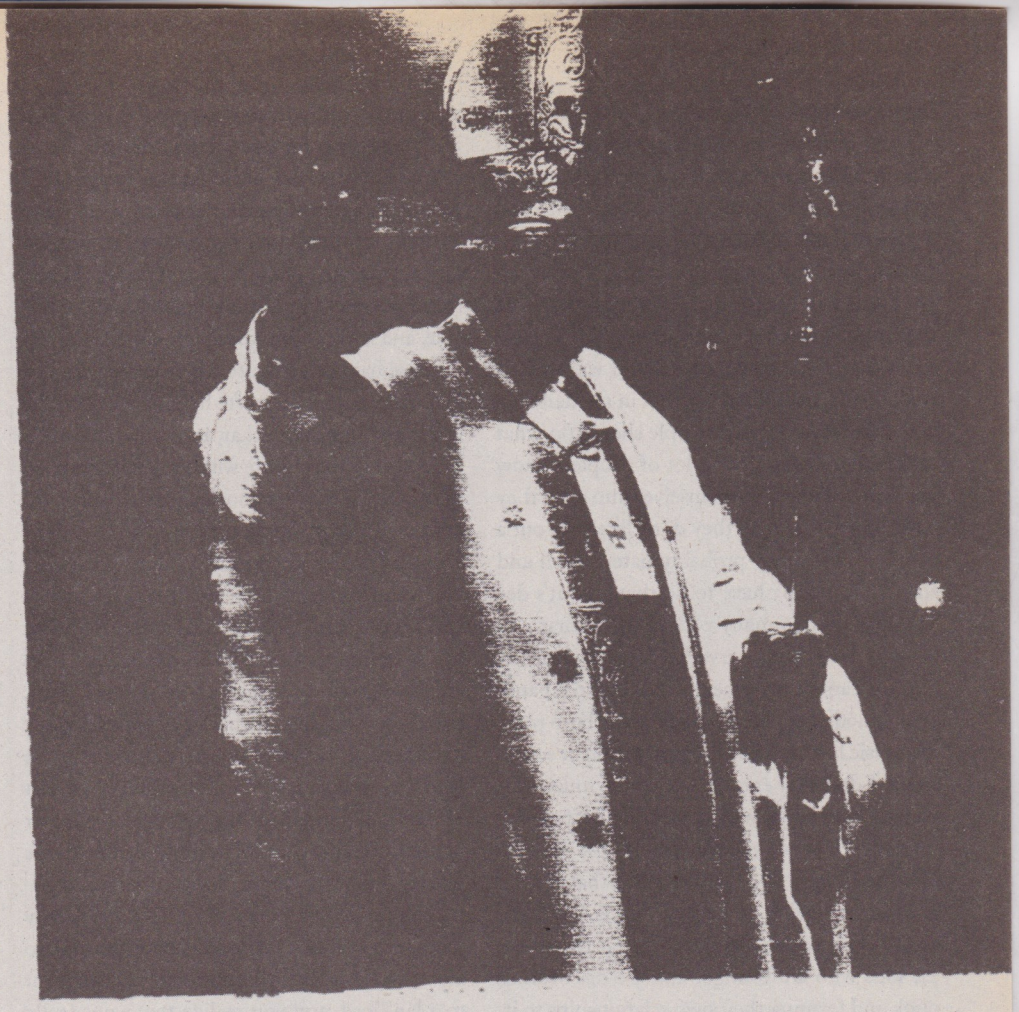
MRR: What do you think about what happened at Pointless Fest last summer?

SHAWN: It's fucked up. I think that there will be a million different stories about what happened, but I know a couple of things. First thing I know is that cops are fucking assholes, especially Philly cops, who are the biggest assholes in the world, and you don't fuck with them. I fucked with them once, and I went to jail for it. I learned my lesson: don't do it! Lesson two is that traveling scumfucks are assholes and they're not in it for anyone else except to fucking hang out, get fucked up, cause trouble, get shows shut down, be hangers-on, and they're worthless. When the fest first started happening it was a bunch of friends—everyone kind of knew everybody. As the years went on, it got bigger with more bands. More people were showing up, which is cool, but also this viral strand of people showed up and infected it, and they killed it. I know some people who are like, "Well, it's fucked up to blame the traveler kids." Well no, it's not, 'cuz I know the cops suck. The day after the fest got shut down, me and Rob were walking down the street, and we run into these two traveler kids and they're like, "Hey, what's goin' on later?" And we're like, "Not much, man, the fest got shut down." And they looked at each other and laughed, high-fived, and said "Yeah, we shut that shit down"! You know, if it hadn't been for that, I would have probably questioned whose fault it was…but now I have no doubt in my mind as to why the fest ended.

KANE: I think it's variable what the term "traveler" means. I guess it's the name we're giving to the people who are just sitting outside and causing problems.

SHAWN: I'll retract that name. I do have a lot of friends who do travel that are really fucking awesome, and are willing to throw down for what they believe in, so we'll just call them scumfucks. These are people who sit outside shows, shit their pants, sick their dogs on people, beg for money, and lay in their own vomit.

KANE: It's weird how scumfuck culture changed what happens in the punk scene. I remember, there used to be a time when you could just show up in a city and find other punks or people into the DIY scene, and right away you'd be able to hang out and stay at their house and be welcomed. Then you'd do their dishes, you know what I mean, or someone came through your town you'd do the same for them. After a while it just bred this culture of people who did nothing but leach on that and people got sick of it, and there became this division where now there's this hostility towards those kinds of people and that lifestyle. It sucks, because it ruined a good thing. Now you have these people who give nothing back, but still think they are entitled to all the scene creates. A fest is a lightning rod for them to gather, for whatever reason.

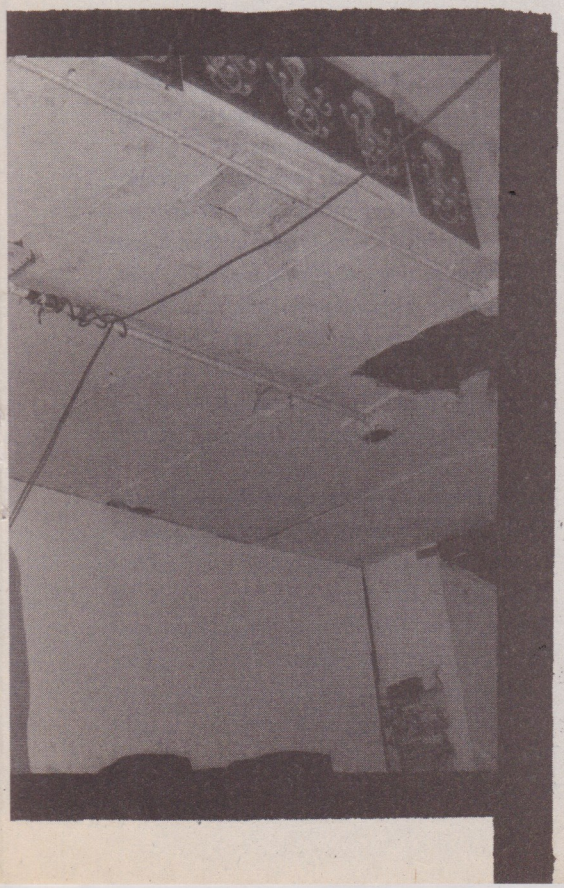


MRR: Do you think there is a schism between punk and radical activism in Philly?

CHRIS: Yes.

SHAWN: Yes.

DEREK: I disagree; I would say no, I think there is a schism between aspects of each. The next show we're playing is a benefit at an autonomous space for friends within the activist scene that used to be punk. If there were a schism on that level, then we probably wouldn't be playing it. I think there are reactionary people in the activist scene who, as part of their idea of self-improvement, view punk as stupid, so they don't just move away from it, but they criticize it. Naturally, people who have a lot invested in it, like myself, are gonna take that personally, and I've learned a fuck of a lot more and have catered my life towards being involved in radical politics more from what I've learned from punk than from some dogmatic self-centered activist scene. It was really heartbreaking, particularly prior to moving to Philadelphia. Chicago's anarchist scene wasn't like other cities, where it sprung from punk. There were a lot of anarchists who weren't from that background. This is my perception of getting involved in it, so you didn't really have those worlds crossing, but when I came here it was a little bit different. It seems like a lot of people involved in punk gave off the notion that they were better than what they came from. A lot of the politics that these people got into are just a revival of hippie culture bullshit. I'd rather be concerned with ending trade liberalization policies that are inflicting the rest of the world than I would with who supposedly made a racist comment at the co-op.



SHAWN: I think I've seen the self-defeating side of activism when people get caught up with the smallest, most stupid shit and don't look at the big picture. When I first got into punk, it pretty much meant you were an activist. In the mid-'90s a lot of punk bands like **Aus Rotten** were very outspoken about political issues and that was an inspiring time. Being a punk didn't mean you were just an apathetic drunk and I feel that's what's happening now. Politics aren't cool anymore. I don't feel that same charge from bands, like they give a shit about what's going on. It's like, "OK, we're just gonna play American hardcore and call people faggots and that will be the extent of what we do." Our world is in fucking utter peril and nobody gives a shit, and nobody has anything to say. **Witch Hunt** still talks about stuff. That's part of the reason why I enjoy being in this band, because I feel that this is my one last link to political activism in punk.

MRR: I know the majority of Stations is over the age of 30. What's it like being a punk in a country where a great deal of radical subcultures are looked upon as "youth movements" to be grown out of at 25? Does punk mean something different now than when you first got involved?

DEREK: Well, some of us are closer to 40.

SHAWN: I feel that age has smoked out the weeds. It's easier to be a punk when you're 18. By the time you're 25, people start going away slowly but surely, and now I'm 29. I know that all of the friends I have are diehards. I know who they are and what I can expect from them and that they are not going anywhere. I think it's awesome. Society has this notion of 30 being this turning point. I've learned a lot more, but mentality-wise, I'm still 16, so to me, it's nothing. The older I get, the better I get at things. I look forward to getting older because I'm better at what I do now than I ever was before.

KANE: I think of it as a badge of honor to be over 30 and still doing these things. It's inspiring to me to see other older punks doing stuff. I think that's becoming more commonplace. Look at the guys from **Caustic Christ**. They're still doing it. They're still keeping it real. I don't have any disdain for younger kids—thinking they're gonna phase out or whatever. I don't expect them all to be around forever either. I think I'm still the same fuckup I was when I was 18, still doing the same stuff I never grew out of. I can look up old friends on MySpace, and they're all fuck-

ing accountants, married with kids. All these pictures of their kids and dogs and shit—what a really fucking boring life. (*laughs*) It makes me feel good to have a life that I'm happy with and is varied. Punk is still a huge part of it.

CHRIS: So many people think that they have to get settled in a certain lifestyle by the time they're 30. There's no real reason why you have to do that. I'm a lot smarter than I was when I was 20, and I'm able to use that in my daily life and enjoy myself more. People should do what makes them happy, but a lot of people I know get scared. They drill themselves into a job they hate, marry someone they don't like, pop out a couple of kids they probably hate as well and then… You don't have to do that, and it's depressing that so many people think that you have to live this conservative lifestyle. Personally… I cannot imagine not playing in a band. Any period of my life where I haven't been playing music has been like being in prison or something. I don't get enough out of life unless I'm playing loud music with somebody. It's not that important how old you are; it's just how you feel.

DEREK: Philly's good in the sense that it's the East Coast version of the Bay. This is where the punks came to die. I think it's great that there are kids who are younger and are discovering punk and forming their own relationships to it. And there are people like us who are older and have our relationships—this is the real key to punk not just being an idea. Sure, if you have the same constrictive thoughts of what something is suppose to be, after ten years, it's going to become tedious. So the trick of it for me is always, "How does punk stay relative to your life as it changes, because of age, different experiences, or what have you?" I think that's why Philly has been successful in the sense of people staying around. There are a lot of *adults*, so to speak, who are still involved in punk and didn't stay to this rigid form of what its supposed to be in a youth culture. They evolved it to how their lives existed and changed.

MRR: Derek, you own a home and Kane lives in a collectively owned house. What's that like in Philly where it seems most punks live in houses owned by slumlords?

KANE: It's this conflicting thing in punk/activist DIY culture where you want to travel and experience different things, move around to different cities and whatnot, but at the same time there's this desire to not pay money to a fucking landlord and create permanent structures to things. I think in Philadelphia there are a lot of people kind of settling down, but in a good way. They're investing in this house that's not owned by a shitty landlord, and you put the work into it—the labor is for yourself and not for someone else. My particular house was bought by a group of anarchists fifteen or twenty years ago without a fourth floor because it had burned down, hence the name "Cinder Garden." Then they built that fourth floor up and made it livable, and it's been improved upon ever since. Its purpose has been a house where people can live for cheap, as long as you're helping work on the house and things like that, and you're able to do other things in your life without being strapped by rent or any kind of mortgage payment so it's kind of an ideal situation.

DEREK: I lived in a cooperative house called Castle Greyskull for many years. It was affordable, and people really helped one another out. But by nature, unless you really have your shit buckled down, a co-op house can be very transient, especially if it's filled with a lot of punks. I know a number of the other houses that were in the land trust cooperative that Greyskull was a part of that had permanent members for a number of years, creating more of a family feeling. It was hard to deal with a lot of people coming and going. I like to keep quiet and neat, and generally that's not what that house was about. (*laughs*) So after a while, it taxes you, then you're paying rent to a landlord, and you realize that's not really good either. You don't have ownership. It's not ownership in the sense that you have a piece of property, but more that you have the freedom to do what you want to do. When my wife and I decided to buy our house, it actually cost us less to pay off our mortgage than what we were paying in rent, and it's our own thing to do what we want. For example, we have a vacant lot behind us where we made a deal with the guy who owns that piece of property that as long as we maintain it to some extent we can use it. For the last two seasons we've had gardens in there, and we've been able to feed ourselves quite a bit from April through November. It's conflicting because the neighborhood we moved into is a white working class neighborhood that's on the upswing, so to speak, so there are issues of gentrification involved with that. Nobody wants to push anyone out. For me it's a hard call, because we don't make a lot of money either, and we want to live someplace where we're not going to get fucked with all the time, which was the case when I lived in West Philly. I had a number of incidents and I just didn't want to live in that environment anymore. You decide to go to someplace that's affordable and reasonably safe and that has a lot of impact on the people who have been there for years and there is no clear-cut solution to it, but I'm sure I'm part of the problem.

KANE: One thing I wanted to mention about my house is that it's older and needs lots of work. It makes me really happy to be able to have friends come out and work on it. We have friends that do the heating, electric, or carpentry. Having that within a community is pretty great and there's something respectable about having some sort of physical trade like electrician or carpenter. I think it's great when we can work outside of the system of landlords and shitty contractors.

MRR: Have any of you ever used your undergarments as a toilet? Shit yourself? If so, where? And the most public place?

CHRIS: That's a leading question

DEREK: I've done it a lot of times. I'm not sure but I think 36 has taken a toll on my ass. I shat myself in the home computer aisle of Target and at Home Depot too.

KANE: I decline to answer the question

SHAWN: I have never shat myself

MRR: You fart a lot for jokes. It never backfired?

SHAWN: No. I have control.

CHRIS: There's really only once or twice I can think of, but those were in my teenage years. I was on a college campus and in between buildings, and I had to go really bad so I figured, "Fuck it, I'll just go." But it was all liquid. It just sprayed down the inside of my pants and legs, so I had to run into a bathroom, take my clothes off, and try to clean them inside of the stall.

MRR: Kane, you are a game-master. Tell me about your involvement in role-playing. What games do you play? Is game-master the appropriate term? Dungeon master?

KANE: No, game master is perfectly appropriate. I've always been into games stuff since being in junior high school. One of my best friends when I was getting into punk was also into gaming stuff so that kind of fostered it. You'd be surprised at how many punks are actually gamers underneath. I am the game master for a campaign every Thursday and the people playing are a bunch of other punks. It's pretty great.

MRR: Derek, I know you're really involved in *Muay Thai*. What inspired you to start training?

DEREK: I was riding my bike home to West Philly almost four years ago after seeing **Wire** and I got a flat tire. Three dudes held me up at literal gunpoint—guns stuck in the back of my head over a fence. To say the least, it was pretty frightening. I don't really know how to fight and I didn't want to be the kind of person who

carried a gun around. There's a common misconception of mixed martial arts that you try it to be a bad ass on the street, but that wasn't the intention. The intention was not to let this type of situation happen again. It was always physically challenging... but it was something I worked very hard to get good at. I started getting into the culture and getting better at it, and then competitions came into the picture. There are aspects that people don't really know you have to do, like getting up at six in the morning, running five miles, doing half an hour of jump rope, training for three hours on Saturday, getting socked or kicked in the face and having to keep your hands up, get back up, and keep going. The amount that you have to put in mentally and physically to try and be OK at it is what appealed to me.

MRR: Do you compete?

DEREK: Yeah, I've competed a number of times. I've have had four sanctioned fights and probably about four or five smokers, which are basically intramurals: fights between people on my team. I started it at 32 and most people are retired at that point, so I was never gonna be a pro fighter, but I still do it just out of enjoyment. To me, it isn't Muay Thai unless you fight. You can hit bags as much as you want, but unless you've had somebody really try to take your head off you haven't really experienced it. After all those hours of training, you really want to see what happens when the rubber hits the pavement. Plus, it's fun; it's like a chess game where you gotta figure out what the other guy is doing. One thing I want to add is that there is a lot of culture involved in Muay Thai. It's been around for almost eight hundred years. It has helped the Thais defend themselves against Burma for hundreds of years.

SHAWN: One of the craziest things I ever saw at a show was when a naked guy tried to fight our friend and Derek flew across the room and took out that naked guy. That was great.

MRR: That was one of the crowning moments of Philadelphia punk...

SHAWN: That's why I like being in a band with Derek, if I get fucked with then Derek will beat their ass.

MRR: Shawn, you are one of the most active musicians in the Philly scene. How do you do it?

SHAWN: Lots of coffee and no sleep. It's really not hard at all 'cuz it's why I moved here. Some people bitch about band practice but to me it's what I live for. Its fun, I enjoy it, I get my shit out, and it's the one thing that I know I do well—the one thing where I don't doubt myself at all. I play guitar in **Lost Cause** and I play bass in **Mischief Brew**.

MRR: I know a lot of you are into horror movies. This question is actually for Chris. *The Exorcist* or *Alucarda*?

CHRIS: I guess technically speaking, *The Exorcist* is a better film, but *Alucarda* is so damn impressive, if that answers the question.

MRR: What are your favorite horror movies?

SHAWN: *Return of the Living Dead*. One of my first exposures to punks was in this movie. It came out in 1984 and I was five years old at some family friend's twelfth birthday party and they were all watching horror movies, and I had nev-

er seen a horror movie at this point. I remember walking into the room and seeing a slimy zombie shout "Brains!" and eat the one punk dude's head and it was the scariest thing I'd seen in my life. It traumatized me, and I lived by a cemetery, which made it all the scarier. The soundtrack rules too.

KANE: I'd have to say *The Exorcist*, because it's such a great movie. It upset a lot of people and really raised the bar for horror films in general.

DEREK: *The Exorcist* is my favorite, too, for the same reasons. Twenty-five years later, it's still more shocking than most of the horror movies coming out today. Linda Blair had to have bodyguards around her for weeks because people were so flipped out and offended by it. A close second is definitely the original *The Ring*, not the American remake bullshit.

CHRIS: I think I'll have to go with *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre*. It's just flawless, in my opinion. There's not one second of that movie that I don't like. It does everything right.

KANE: Little sicko.

CHRIS: (*Laughs*) Yeah.

MRR: You guys have a vehicle that runs on diesel and veggie oil known as the Battlebus. Do you think this would survive the zombie apocalypse? And do you think it could be made to run on the fertilized remains of scumfucks?

DEREK: I wanted a bus that could run on veggie oil and then it had to be modified with bars to keep the equipment from being stolen. I bought the actual bus in North Jersey over a year go. It's always a work in progress, but I'm glad we did it, with fuel prices right now. It's getting harder for working people to travel around. Punk's a big vacation in a lot of ways and we can't shell out a lot of money. People are surprised when I tell them it runs on vegetable oil and that it's this totally feasible alternative you can do yourself. There's actually a whole scene around that. Although I don't think you could fertilize scumfucks.

CHRIS: It could be modified though.

SHAWN: It would definitely survive a zombie apocalypse.

MRR: What are your favorite places to play?

KANE: It depends not so much on the largeness of the show but more for the fact that we can hang out with our friends in other cities.

SHAWN: Pittsburgh, because I grew up outside of there, and the punk scene made me who I am. A lot of great, supportive people there.

MRR: Gauze or Poison Idea?

DEREK: Gauze.

CHRIS: Poison Idea.

SHAWN: Poison Idea.

KANE: Poison Idea.

MRR: Discharge or Black Flag?

DEREK: Discharge.

CHRIS: Black Flag.

KANE: It's definitely Discharge, 'cuz fuck Henry Rollins.

SHAWN: Discharge.

MRR: What do you think of the current political climate? Is Anarchism a viable political philosophy?

SHAWN: I think that America is the modern day Rome. We've taken 200 years to build ourselves up and fuck the rest of the world up and like those other fallen empires we will fall. Things will only get worse before they get better. I think as far as anarchism goes, in a political sense, the US is far too large and spread out for anything like that to work.

KANE: I agree that things will definitely get worse. Everything is so out of control. A lot of it relates to the destructive powers of capitalism. It is the quickest way to spread power. The bigger asshole you are, the more you get through capitalism. This will all fall apart. I don't know how or when, but it's not sustainable.

DEREK: I think what's unique about the US now, is that it's so prevalent in promoting corporate statehood. We have the most involvement in supporting the IMF and World Bank and their strongholds across the world. That's really where the power is, in who holds what.

MRR: Explain the ideas behind the songs "Cupped Hand Solution" and "New Markets For the Ancient Ones." Do you think political lyrics preach to the converted?

KANE: *Cupped Hand Solutions* is a criticism of activism when people approach it as an insincere vanguard approach. One of the lines, "They're selling papers at funerals," was from an incident during the riots in Cincinnati a couple of years ago where there was this call for people to come out for the funeral of one of the young men killed by cops. It was this somber event and they wanted people to be there to have this big presence and I got there and it was really frustrating and insulting to see people pushing their political agendas there—selling their fucking newspaper at a funeral that you were asked to be a presence at. The song was a backlash against that and the CrimeThinc view on activism: «Well, if I'm running around and dumpster diving and that frees my life, then that should liberate everyone else and everyone should do that. And let's go a burn down McDonalds!» That's not gonna help people. People go there because they have a dollar menu, which is all they can afford after working all fucking day and don't have the energy to make dinner for their kids. How could you attack somebody for going to McDonalds? A waste of energy when it comes to activism.

New Markets for the Ancient One is a combination of activist theory with horror-nerd references comparing the rise of the ancient ones from the Cthulhu mythos to the spread of corporate statehood and global capitalism. In **HP Lovecraft**'s mythos, there are cultists that want to bring these ancient gods into the world knowing full well that they will destroy humanity. In the real world there are these people who are pushing capitalistic agendas knowing they are destroying people and doing what they can to spread it across the globe so they can gain power. Authors like **Lovecraft** write about scary monsters, but I think the rise of global capitalism is a fucking scary monster.

MRR: Future plans?

SHAWN: We're going to record soon for a 12", play some shows, and then Chris is leaving. After that, we'll see what happens. We're gonna record with J. Robbins from **Government Issue**, who does a really good job. I'm stoked because I don't think our previous recordings captured the essence of the band.

KANE: We are gonna continue to write new songs and play shows to fifteen people or less in a basement somewhere and still be happy with that when we're hanging out with our friends afterwards. That's all I really wanna get out of it—hanging out with these guys and writing music

SHAWN: Thanks to all our friends, everyone in Philly, and everyone that allows the DIY. scene to continue. We have a new eight-song 12" out. $10 ppd. It's available through us via PayPal at stationspunx@gmail.com, or from **Velted Regnub**, **Feral Ward**, or **Hardcore Holocaust**. ■

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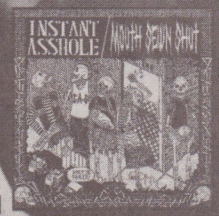

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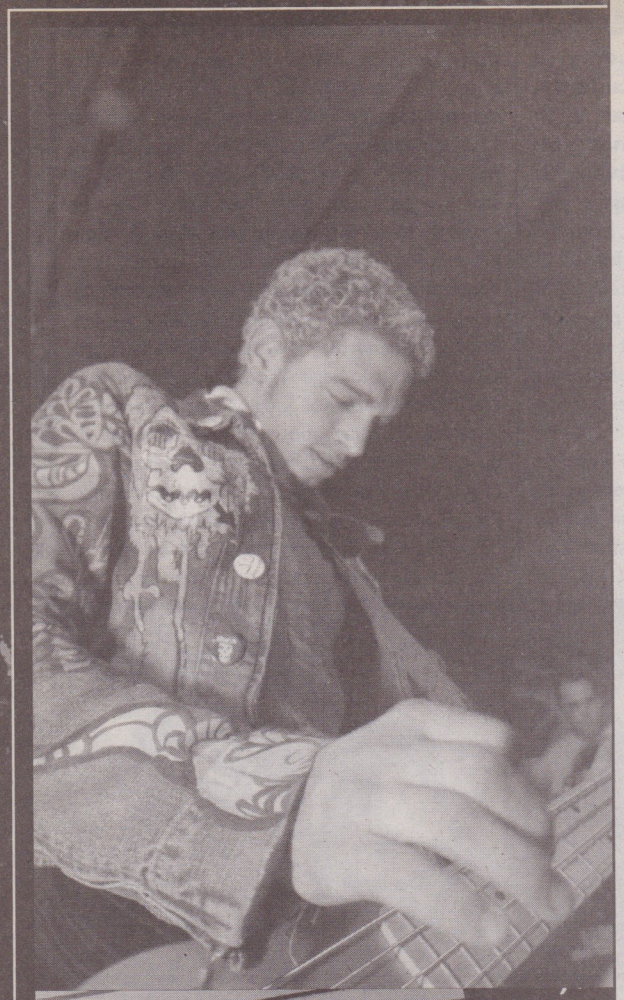
Interview by Javier "Tropiezo" Nicolau

MRR: Pseudonyms of every band member, age, and what they do in the band.
Peludiente: Vocals and some guitar. Age 26.
Francinquillo: Drums. Age 24
BusyBoy: Bass and backing vocals. Age 21
RickyRonda: Guitar and backing vocals. Age 10
Josu: Guitar and backing vocals. Age 28

MRR: Could you give a brief history of how the band got together, your concept and what do you look to accomplish with the band.
Diente Perro: We met skateboarding in Old San Juan. Pelu asked some fellow skaters if they knew anyone who played the drums and Francinquillo replied that he did. We jammed one day and then the experiment began. Up until then it was just Pelu singing and playing guitar and Francisco playing the drums. Then BusyBoy joined. Someone told Pelu that Luis David (BusyBoy) played both guitar and bass. Pelu asked him if he wanted to play "something furious" and BusyBoy agreed to meet up with them. We were a trio until Pelu broke his wrist while skating down a hill. When that happened, Pelu asked Ricky "the stripper Ronda" (who had played a couple of songs with us before) if he could continue playing with the band and Jimmy Rip also joined on guitar. Ricky was Pelu's skate pal, but Jimmy eventually left to pursue his own musical project. Next was Ruy Andres to play guitar, who is an insanely furious guitarist. After Ruy left, Josu Tropiezo entered the mayhem with his no-bullshit guitar madness. From a trio, to a quintet—and as a consequence the band acquired more depth in the racket and better sound quality. Everything sounded better.

The concept with Diente Perro is to create a space in which the racket/music, lyrics, speed, and aggression are in constant synergy. Facets of the existential reality can be shown, which typically remain hidden behind fanaticism, fear, social coercion, repression, fascism, and lobbying and abuses of power. The speed and aggressiveness in this potpourri are necessary. The aggressiveness is a reaction of a non-conformist character and the struggle that exists because of the many evils and wrongs. We don't show a happy face. It's time to kill!

MRR: What other things do you guys do with your lives besides playing with Diente Perro?
Pelu: Survive, work with my mom whenever I can, skate, record/edit skate videos, graffiti, HC/punk/ska shows, make video/art, documentaries, short-films, music videos, and sometime work as a camera assistant when movies are shot in Puerto Rico. I write about what happens *inside* and *outside* of me. I play the guitar and am now learning drums. I do some graphic design and I started my own magazine project called *Antitesis* which talks about culture, art, skateboarding, and music. I'm also trying to organize my life and get myself together.
BusyBoy: I also play the guitar in a band called Fulminante and I am practicing the drums so I can



play in another band. I work as a sound assistant in a company that does audio for events.

Josu: I play guitar in Juventud Crasa, La Virgen Del Pozo, and Tropiezo. I have a recording studio and also work as a paperboy and office clerk.

RickyRonda: I read a lot about globalism and other subjects related to the esoteric agenda of the New World Order. I also am part of an elite team of online gamers and we kick ass! We can go against any team playing Call of Duty and whenever I'm not doing any of the fore-mentioned, I'm probably fixing PCs at home.

Cisco: Right now I am finishing my studies. I was working in a coffee shop in the San Juan area where I love to skate, but the coffee shop closed and later I was selling dildos, condoms, and other novelty stuff at a different place. Whenever I'm not doing that, I'm getting fatter by the minute and drinking like a maniac.

MRR: I have noticed a theme of diversity in your lyrics, what inspires this theme?

Pelu: The lyrics are in reaction to experiences concerning life and death—all these things that attack us when we are trying to survive. The lyrics concern biological needs like a person looking to use the bathroom and confronting people that deny this right because of physical appearance. I want to expose the great faults and negligent actions of this establishment that exists under a supposed democratic system where the least that is allowed is the intervention of the people and freedom of speech. They don't allow freedom of speech because it makes people think and begin questioning themselves, their reality, and their existence. They only foster those messages favorable to their causes. Sometimes things that used to be un-popular or taboo are turned into a commercial trend and are then used by politicians in their campaigns to appeal to the masses… their prey.

MRR: A few months ago, you guys played at the Latino Fest, how did people react to Diente Perro and what kind of experiences did you guys have in Chicago?

RickyRonda: People were excited every place that we played. In Chicago, we enjoyed the good public skateparks that are open to all, something we don't have in Puerto Rico. I saw chemtrails in the sky and we were fortunate to meet a lot of good people, especially Benny from No Slogan and everyone from the La Armada posse.

Pelu: Lots of people were supportive of us and we had shows organized in Chicago, Madison, and Grand Rapids. The crowd had lots of energy when we played, and we sold CDs, t-shirts, pins, patches, stickers, and people kept asking when we would return. There were so many people that helped us out during the whole tour and gave us a place to stay, love, friendship, food, and lots of hospitality. Thanks to everyone who helped us during our time in the US!

MRR: Can you give us your opinion on playing a festival that is called the Latino Fest? It being a festival of Latin bands in the US, don't you guys think this would have limited the attendance to only Latino fans?

Diente Perro: Playing the Latino Fest felt great, because as Latinos we were able to share a common place in a land where the Latinos are a growing majority. We don't think that it limits the interest to just Latinos, because other people that know what it is all about will be there… just like the Japanese people that traveled for the fest. There were people from almost every country in Latin America as well as Japan, China, North America, and Palestine. Every punk rock community, in most cases, is a minority in the larger society they are a part of. In these spaces, minorities of different cultural backgrounds unite to create a bigger and varied body of people. The only thing that would limit the interest to this type of event would be how each individual thinks.

MRR: What are your future plans as a band and individuals?

Diente Perro: Keep creating new music/racket, record all the material we have and attempt to be a part of compilations, split releases, and any other things that someone would want to release. We would like to continue traveling to different places in the world, and return to Chicago to hang out with all the friends we made there, and show the DVD of our 2007 tour. Collaborate with other local bands from different parts of the world. Keep playing, putting on shows, and keeping the thing alive. There is a Puerto Rican hardcore sampler that is already out and we have one track, "Muerte en Patineta." You can download it here: www.rapidshare.com/files/107307190/vaprhcpunkrockska2008.zip. For more info check out: www.discosdehoy.com. We will also be on another compilation from Trash or Be Trashed Records with bands like Jenny Fatale Y Los Degolladores, Unabandamas, Oberdibaigot and others. For more info: www.myspace.com/thrashorbethrashrecords. Our friends from Japan, Hiro and Kenta, are also working on a compilation that will include two or three tracks on 7"

and a CD with Condenada, NN (Martin of Los Crudos' new punk band from San Francisco), Ultratumbados (Chicago), En La Olla (NYC), Sleeping Creepers (Chicago) and Sobrios Emputados (Wyoming), among others.

Pelu: I want to keep on with Diente Perro until I die, and continue to with the audio-visual medium to produce short films, documentaries, skate videos, and music videos. I plan to keep up with my writing, drawing, skateboarding, and whatever the fuck else. Help my mom with her career and work and maybe in the near future direct a low budget film… but a good one!

BusyBoy: I want to keep skateboarding, traveling, playing/creating music, and I would like to become a sound engineer.

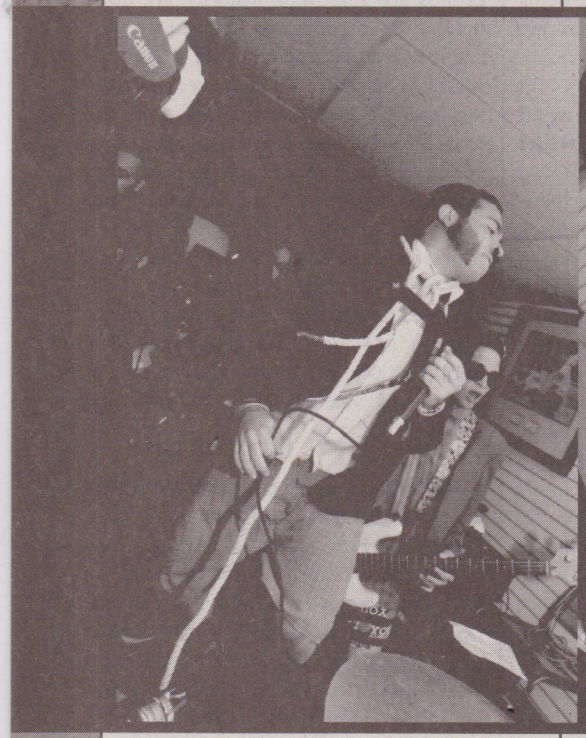
Josu: As a band, I want to finish our album that is still incomplete, work on a new album, tour, and fuck things up. As an individual, I plan to keep playing music and working with Discos de Hoy distro, as long as I can and as viciously as possible. Some day I would like to have a place to do shows.

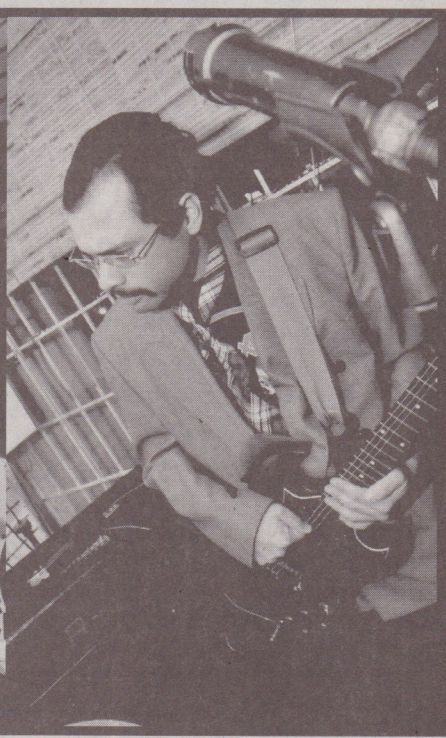
RickyRonda: As an individual, I am organizing a civil action group to try to stop the fluoridation program in our water systems to see if we can achieve at least a microscopic victory for humanity and a big step towards the good health and progress of our country.

Francinquillo: I plan to drink, fuck, and play the drums.

MRR: In the song "Educacion Prostituida" (*Ho'ed Education*), you criticized traditional education and the corporate mass media that alienates the opinions and individuality of people. Being that some of you are actually college students, how do you synthesize that with your ideas and beliefs so that you are not contradicting yourselves?

Pelu: Well, in my case, while at college I realized a lot of things. Like for example, from the point that we are little kids, we are forced to go to school, and the education system bombards us with their indoctrination… programming to lead us to become obedient workers and part of their system. I began questioning everything that I was told by the education system—what I have learned, and how it's useful so that I can manipulate it in a way that goes in the complete opposite direction to where they want us to go. We take those tools, mediums, and techniques to show our vision and way of thinking, so that we can reach others and they also can question themselves instead of just keeping their thoughts internal while they obey and fear true liberty. In that way we dismantle what they gave us in order to create.





MRR: I have noticed that many of your shows are more than just arrive, play, and end of story. Sometimes you guys perform in costumes (without falling into the '80s rock cliché). What inspires you to do it?

Pelu: Well, they are conceptual performances—sometimes sarcastic and other times just straight to the point. We base it on different things, like characters or people in society that are accepted for what they have or people that are rejected for who they are. We go from the black and white areas, but we also enter the grey zones. For one show we dressed up as an '80s hair-metal band, with the sparkly feminine shirts, feathers, make up, lots of red lipstick, great '80s hair, etc. The people that saw us for the first time had a different reaction from the people that already knew what we are about. There was some shock concerning our image and some uncomfortable looks... those reactions are what we are looking for and that is where we want to go. Once the music begins, some understand that we demonstrate not judging people without knowing anything about them. We want to destroy those social taboos. In Chicago we disguised ourselves as our own cultural mix. RickyRonda was the white Spanish conquistador, Pelu was the clergyman and bringer of Christianity to the poor and lost souls of the new world, BusyBoy was the betrayed African who was sold and/or stolen to become a slave, Josu was the native *taino* and Francisco was the warrior Caribe indian. Every single character was part of our history, which is filled with abuse, colonization, repression, genocide, robbery, murder, and rape. All of this created our actual reality and our ethnicity. We are still a whore colony pimped by Uncle Sam.

MRR: What's your take on the legalization of drugs?

Ricky: Something the government won't let things happen because they won't make as much money as they do now keeping it in the underground economy. The whole drug war is a big scam in which they play both sides. There is a lot more going on behind the scenes that

will also keep it "against the law." The drug topic is a long one, but I suggest checking out a documentary about the American drug war at www.american-drugwar.com.

MRR: Most of the band members are skaters. How do you relate the liberty of the skateboarding and street-art with punk rock?

Pelu: They are different languages but similar. When I'm on top of a skateboard, there are no rules, no limits, and nothing else exists. It is creation through destruction, which is very similar to punk rock. What we create is the destruction of that which has been imposed on us. It is in those seconds, minutes, or moments where you really are free and express what you really are. With both I have equal amounts of fun. I hate competitions and the people that skate just so others can look at them. I skate because I like it and that is what I do, just like with punk rock. I don't have to jump an elephant in a 360-flip to show how much I like skateboarding. If someone does that, cool.

BusyBoy: It's like the same feeling. You are expressing yourself, and at the same time having fun. The establishment and most people are against what skateboarding is about. With a skateboard you destroy Babylon, and with music you want people to wake up and start to destroy.

Francinquillo: When you are performing it's you and your instrument by your own, and when you are skateboarding it's you and your board.

RickyRonda: Skateboarding sometimes reflects the attitude of punk rock. For me, skateboarding is an art and not a sport. So if I see punk rock as a vehicle of artistic musical expression, then it seems to me that both activities are very similar. In terms of street art, I am in favor of it as long as it is not vandalism or stupidity. Especially if you are referring to street art as graffiti.

MRR: What is your opinion on the issue of growing older and continuing to play this kind of music and having the lifestyle that you have in a time where society establishes that you must get married with kids, a house, etc?

RickyRonda: The American dream? Ha-ha. The one that you have to be asleep to believe? Age is just a number and life does not have rules for me. If you keep living your life as others expect you to, then you don't live at all.

Pelu: I feel comfortable with my age and continuing with this lifestyle. It makes me happier than other things in my life. I have some friends with children, which there is nothing wrong with, but most of them have jobs that they don't even like just to makes ends meet and feed their families. They are married to people they are not in love with and they stop doing the things that really bring them happiness. Since I first found this, my whole perspective of life changed completely.

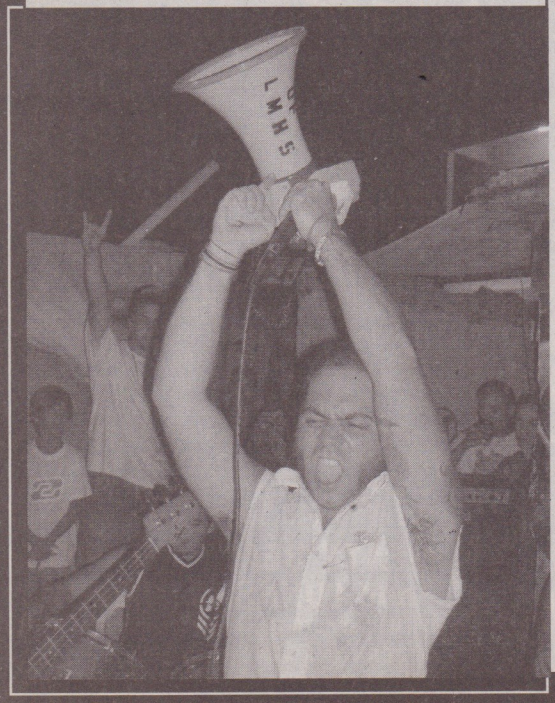
Josu: Well, my life has stayed the same or even gotten better with age. My biggest responsibilities center around punk and music, so this is my priority in life much like marriage, work, and having children is for other people.

MRR: Can you give us a' Diente Perro discography, including compilations and other collaborations?

Pelu: *¡Destruye Casero Records!*, DIY bootleg (2004); *3 Sencillos*, Sucias Ratas (2005); *Estridor de Dientes*, Frankenstein Records (2005); *Raw Demo '06*, DIY (2006). Also, we were recently in the second issue of a local zine titled *Un Trío de Entrevistas*, with interviews of us, Comadre (Redwood City, California), and Bouncing Souls (NYC/New Jersey), and it includes a CD that contains a song from each band. (For more info: zinideas@gmail.com)

MRR: Final words

Pelu: Fuck the education system, the government, and the church. Everyone wake the fuck up, grab your favorite weapon, and create through destruction. *Atencion Muertos en la noche, es hora para matar*! Live your lives, get out of your houses, manifest your rational capacity, *think*, ask yourself questions, express yourself, get together as a group, and move your asses. *Sk8 & Destroy*! Fast and loud. Thanks to *Maximum Rocknroll* for inviting us to be a part of your magazine with this interview. Thanks to Javier "Tropiezo" Nicolau for writing these questions. We would also like to thank everyone that has helped us out and given us a hand in everything we have done.



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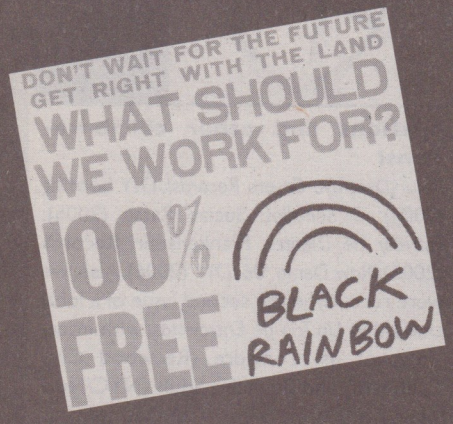

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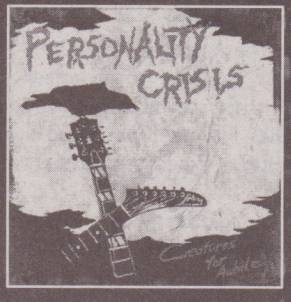

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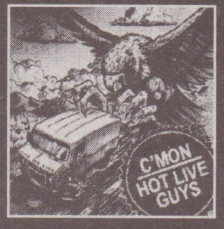

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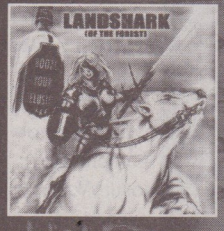

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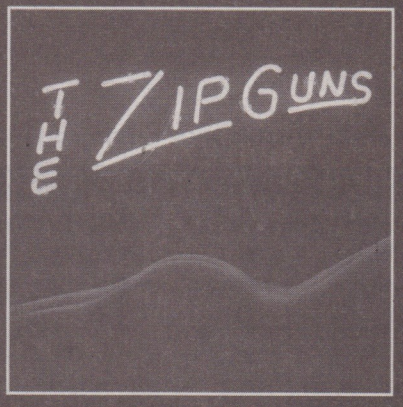

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RIOT CITY Records

Riot City Records existed from 1980-1984, releasing some of the best bands and records of the UK '82 era. Along with No Future Records, Riot City dominated the independent charts and left a lasting mark on punk. I took a time out from celebrating America's independence and waving my flag on July 4, 2008 to speak with Riot City's founder, Simon Edwards. He was kind enough to give in-depth answers on all these questions.

Interview by Eric SN

MRR: How and when did you get involved with working for record labels? Were you the owner of Heartbeat Records?

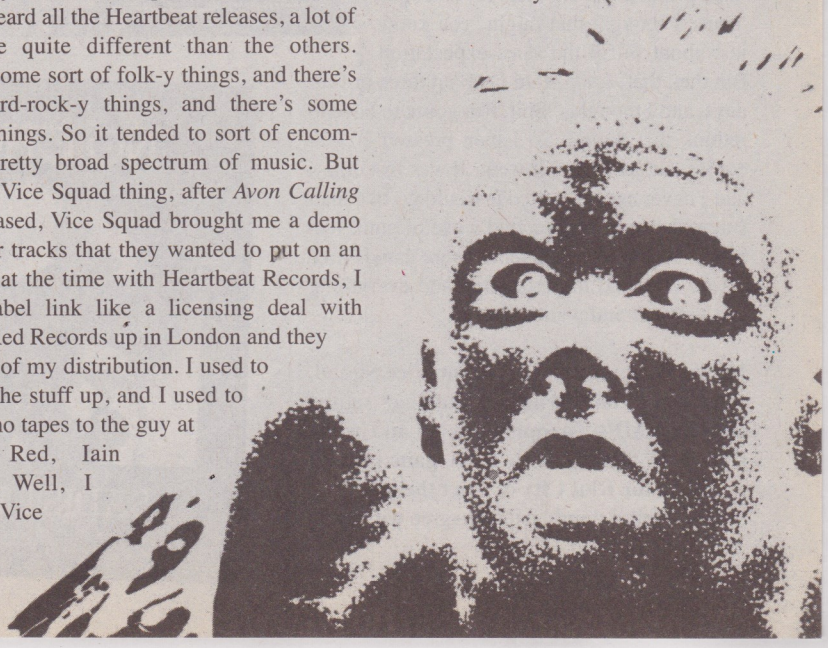
Simon: Yes, I was the owner of Heartbeat Records. Basically my background was that I used to play in bands. I then started managing bands and just looking after them and recording them. And when the independent label thing started in 1976-1977, I thought that I could do that as well. So I started Heartbeat Records. I just basically asked a lot of silly questions, "How'd you do this? How'd you do that?" And then I did it and it worked. And I just went on from there

MRR: How did you first hook up with Vice Squad? I know they were first on the *Avon Calling* compilation on Heartbeat.

Simon: That's right. Well, when I was doing Heartbeat Records, it was essentially just sort of for local bands around the Bristol area. And there were so many bands around at the time that I couldn't put out enough records to satisfy the demand and all the stuff that was going on. So I did *Avon Calling* because that was the obvious thing to do to try and get a lot of the bands on a record so they could get onto the radio and get people to hear it. Vice Squad was one of the bands that gave me a demo tape. They were also playing around the area as well, and I was quite impressed with them. So, yeah, they got a place on the album.

MRR: How did Riot City come to be formed, and why not just release the Vice Squad EP on Heartbeat Records?

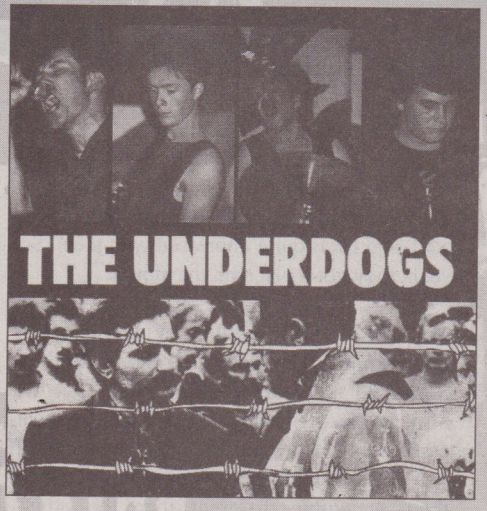
Simon: Because Heartbeat was a label that was essentially for a broad spectrum of music. If you've heard all the Heartbeat releases, a lot of them are quite different than the others. There's some sort of folk-y things, and there's some hard-rock-y things, and there's some punk-y things. So it tended to sort of encompass a pretty broad spectrum of music. But with the Vice Squad thing, after *Avon Calling* was released, Vice Squad brought me a demo with four tracks that they wanted to put on an EP. And at the time with Heartbeat Records, I had a label link like a licensing deal with Cherry Red Records up in London and they did a lot of my distribution. I used to take all the stuff up, and I used to play demo tapes to the guy at Cherry Red, Iain McNay. Well, I took the Vice Squad tape up there, and I said, "Look, hey, we've got this new band that's come along. They're on *Avon Calling*, and now they've done their own EP and it sounds great." You know, and I played it to him and he said it was horrible. (*Laughter*) He didn't like it at all. And he said, "Well, I don't really



want Cherry Red Records to be involved in that at all, even on a distribution basis." So I said, "Ok, Ok." So in the back of my head I thought, "Well fuck you, I should do it myself," which is what I did. I made 1500 copies of it for the first pressing and never looked back, shall we say. Before we did it though, Vice Squad did decide that they would also like to form a label that they would manage because there were a lot of new punk bands starting up with the second wave of punk and they wanted to put a lot of these bands out on this record label. They wanted to call it Riot City Records because at the time, in this city of ours, Bristol, there were a lot of race riots in the poorer areas of Bristol. And of course a lot of the kids in Bristol were sort of frightened and a bit worried of what was going on. So we really considered Bristol to be a "riot city." It just seemed the right thing to call the label Riot City Records. But obviously because, Vice Squad, after they released their first EP, it sold so well and it got to number one on the independent charts and they started doing tours and they really became too busy to worry about doing the label. So they basically left it up to me to manage the label.

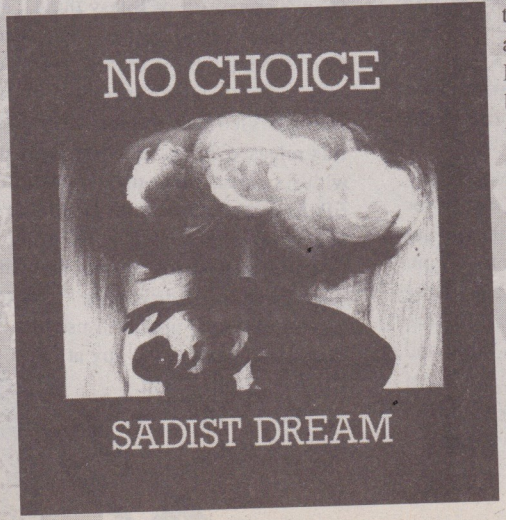
MRR: With the first press of *Last Rockers* only being 1,500 could you have imagined it going on to do so well with 22,000 copies sold and 40 weeks total on the chart?

Simon: Well, no, because when we did the Heartbeat Records releases, we were sort of selling 2,000-3,000 copies of each single, which to me was great. It was a really good thing to get those sorts of sales. When the Vice Squad single sold, the *Last Rockers* sold 1,500 copies in about three or four days, and I just couldn't believe that. I thought, "Why, what's going on here?" And so I then pressed up another 1,500 copies 'cause I thought that might, you know, just about fulfill the sales expectation. But then that, again, sold in about three or four days, and I thought, "Shit, I'm going to have to rethink this thing." So I then pressed 10,000 copies and just away it went. It was just crazy, and I never ever expected it would go like that. But at that time, the second wave of punk was really taking off and there were bands like Chron Gen and the Exploited and everything just took off and went crazy.



MRR: With all the success for Vice Squad, what were your feelings when they signed on with EMI's Zonophone label and why? Did their signing with EMI gain greater exposure for Riot City or hurt the label?

Simon: Well, I didn't actually agree with them signing to EMI. I didn't think it would do them any good at all because I thought "Well, surely if there's enough demand for Vice Squad material, we can meet that demand through Riot City independently." And I still believe we could've done that. And I actually know that I sold more Vice Squad records than EMI did, but that's another story. (*Laughter*) They had a management team, well, not team, but they had a couple of guys working for them who were really sort of set on them signing to EMI. And there was not a lot I could do about it. I was the guy that was publishing their music. So I did think in a way, "Well, so long as I can keep the publishing, if they want to go and record for EMI, that doesn't really matter because then at least my Riot City publishing side of it will benefit from their EMI sales. And then I can still put out new singles by other bands." So that's the way I thought about it. But no, I wasn't happy about them doing it. I think it probably got them out to a different type of audience because a lot of independent record shops that were selling punk rock at the time didn't want to stock EMI records. Even though the Sex Pistols were on EMI, the Sex Pistols were probably like a... I mean they were a bit of a one-off in as much as, "yes, they signed to a major," but the second wave of punk really was a bit more independently-minded. I think they would have sold a lot more had they stayed with me, really, for that reason.



MRR: Would you say this caused some confusion and resentment when they did sign, from the more "hardcore" punks concerning the label?

Simon: Yes. Yes, it did, because Dave and Shane from Vice Squad were the people that came up with the name, "Riot City." They were partially intending on using that for their EMI releases. Now I was happy with that because I didn't mind. I just wanted the name Riot City to be out there. So I was using it on my releases, they were using it on theirs. Now, we did get a bit of flack from the hardcore element, like I told you before. Particularly the Crass people were not happy with it, and they thought I was the back door to EMI. And they obviously didn't like EMI because of their corporate leanings, shall we say. I didn't have any connection whatsoever with EMI. The only connection I had with EMI was that they were paying me money for the publishing of Vice Squad music.

MRR: Would you say that you staunchly felt that punk should be independent and exist outside of the mainstream music industry? Did you identify with the DIY ethos of hardcore punk?

Simon: I do identify with the DIY and independent aspect of it, but I don't think that any genre of music has the right to stay in one place. If the corporates want to do it, so long as they do it well and they do it right, I'm quite happy for them to do it. Basically it's all about the music isn't it really at the end of the day? If you can put out good music then I will back you as a record buyer no matter what label it's on.

MRR: I know you had a full-time day job back then, but did you ever consider trying to live off the label?

Simon: Many times... But I've never been good at taking risks. (*Laughter*) I'm probably one of the world's worst businessmen. I do all the hard work and all the running around and all the craziness of it, but as far as putting in my hard-earned gains like my house and that type of thing against doing that, then the answer would be no. My family would always come first.

MRR: How old were you at the time, and since you weren't coming from the same angle as the new wave of punks, did you have any difficulty in relating at all?

Simon: I was in my 30s when I started it off, so I was a lot older than a lot of the guys that were in the bands. When I was younger, I was into the Small Faces and the Rolling Stones and The Who. You know, bands like that. I've always been into what I call the punk rock side of the music. I've always liked the anger, the angst, and I could always relate to kids who've got that feeling and that sort of ethos. So I didn't ever feel like an alien with these guys. I got on really well with them. And I always wanted to try and be a fifth member or sixth member of the band. I wanted to help them get through everything they had to do.

MRR: After the first two Vice Squad EPs, next up was the Insane and Abrasive Wheels singles...

Simon: Well, no, it wasn't actually. We did the first two Vice Squad EPs. And we had the third tour by the *Resurrection* EP, and I did a 12" single which was putting the first two 7" EPs, one on either side of this 12" single, which was like a tour release. That was the third one.

MRR: So did Vice Squad choose the Insane and Abrasive Wheels, and when did you take over complete control of all the label decisions?

Simon: When we were on tour, we did a few gigs with the Insane. So the Insane became sort of friends of Vice Squad, and they were obviously a preferred release by Vice Squad, yeah. Abrasive Wheels were obviously known to Vice Squad and they were known to me, but I really wanted to find the band because I'd heard their own release of "Army Song," and I thought it was really, really good. And I thought the band would be good on the label. So that was really my own first release on the label, yeah.

MRR: Were you disappointed with the Insane and Abrasive Wheels moving onto No Future and Clay, respectively?

Simon: No, no. The way I approach these things is that I'm a fan, all right. I buy music as well as make it, and I still do. I was buying loads of records in those days by other bands, so I had more of an affiliation with other labels, and I had a lot of love for what they were doing. So if the bands wanted to go somewhere else, I wasn't going to stand in their way. I wasn't that type of operation. I didn't sign the bands up for three years to make so many singles and albums with me. It was a very relaxed kind of relationship. The Abrasive Wheels more than the Insane—I mean, I loved the Wheels, and we got on really well and I thought their music was great. Sure, it'd be nice to keep them, but I didn't really mind when they went, ya know. Probably of all of the bands that did go, they were probably the ones that I was sadder to see leave, but I was still supportive of them.

MRR: Well, let's face it, their releases on Riot City are much better than their releases on Clay...

Simon: Well, you said that, and I'm going to agree with you. (*Laughter*)

MRR: How were you distributing the records? Through Rough Trade and Cartel? Could people also mail order a copy from you? Did you have any US or international distribution?

Simon: We did it through Caroline. Caroline Exports from the UK put all the stuff out from Rough Trade. And also Rough Trade had Rough Trade America as well.

So the Cartel went out through that direction. The Rough Trade and the Cartel was a really good little operation because I believe there were six separate outlets around the country in various cities like Bristol, York, Birmingham, Edinburgh, and they all had their own shops that were acting as little parts of this distribution network. It just meant that I could just go down the road and just take in the records to the shop and say, "Here's another thousand of

these." You could really see what was happening, and you could see the sales going. You could see all the sales slips coming in and the order forms. It was just quite an exciting time.

MRR: When and how did the *Riotous Assembly* compilation idea come about?
Simon: Again, that was a bit like... if you go back to what I explained about *Avon Calling*, I was getting hundreds and hundreds of demo tapes from bands all over the country. You just feel... well, I felt that I wanted to try and help some of them. Just get one of their songs on a record. *Riotous Assembly* was really an amalgamation of all those demo tapes that I thought deserved a chance to be heard. Some were a good idea, some maybe not so much of a good idea. (*laughter*) I'd say the album was all right—it was good. A bit of fun.

MRR: How did you advertise for submissions for it? How many demo tapes would you say you received from bands interested in being featured?
Simon: There was a little piece put in *Sounds* magazine. I think I spoke to one of the journalists and said, "Look, I've got this idea. I'm going to do this compilation album. Bands that want to send me demos can." But before that really happened, I was getting demos anyway, so I already had a small number of bands that I could choose from.

MRR: I know this was your first encounter with Chaotik Dischord, but was this also how you first got in contact with bands such as Court Martial, Undead, Expelled, and Chaos UK?
Simon: Those were all local bands, and so I live in the same town they live in. You tend to sort of run into them at gigs and pubs and things like that. And they just give you a cassette and say, "Here, listen to this... What do you think of this?" I see them playing live, and if I'm impressed with them I'd have said "Come on guys, let's do a single."

MRR: Were any of the other bands on the compilation ever offered to further record material for Riot City?
Simon: I don't think so, no. A lot of those bands were very, very small bands that weren't doing a lot. I just felt that one song that they'd done was really good, and they needed a chance. It wasn't really sort of a stepping-stone to a Riot City EP. It was really a stepping-stone for them to get off their arses. "Here's an opportunity for you to be heard. Now use it for yourselves and go out there and do something."

MRR: Can you please recount the Chaotic Dischord demo submission story and your feelings upon finding out it was members of Vice Squad?
Simon: (*Laughter*) What a jerk! Ya know? Well, let's put it this way, because of the nature of how I used to receive demo tapes, people would give me demo tapes in pubs, people would send them to me in brown envelopes, and you know, you don't know who these guys are. They could be bloody anybody. But I was at a pub one evening, and the Vice Squad guys were all there. And the Vice Squad guys told me that they had had a tape sent to them by a band from Swindon called Chaotic Dischord. They asked them to give it to me because they didn't want to speak to a guy from a record label. I mean, something as silly as that, and I bought into it. I thought, "Well, yeah, some people are like that, some people aren't. Some people may be a bit nervous about meeting such an industry mogul as myself." (*Laughter*) So I thought, "Fuck it, yeah. I'd give it a listen." So I played it, and I thought it was really good. After, I had no idea that it was those guys, no idea at all. But the other thing was, I don't know how, but do you know a band called the Amebix?

MRR: Yes, I do, yeah.
Simon: Yeah, well, one of the guys from the Amebix told me, he said "Simon, you've been hoodwinked here. I'm sure this is fucking Vice Squad." I thought "Don't be fucking stupid, does that sound like Vice Squad to you?" I think he'd probably heard. (*Laughter*) He knew, yeah, but I mean, fuck it, it was the rock 'n' roll swindle, wasn't it? (*Laughter*)

MRR: Were there other Vice Squad side projects besides Chaotic Dischord, Sex Aids, and Dead Katss?

Simon: There was, but they formed their own label, Resurrection Records. They put out one single.

MRR: What single was that?
Simon: I'm trying to think of the bloody name of the band now. You've got me. I'm an old man now! I can't think of things like this.

MRR: Is it Lunatic Fringe by any chance?
Simon: It is Lunatic Fringe, yes. And Lunatic Fringe was also on *Riotous Assembly*.

MRR: Right, right, and then they went on to do that EP later on for COR, I believe.
Simon: They did, yeah. Yup, *Children Of The Revolution*.

MRR: Do you know off hand, is there more Sex Aids or Dead Katss material? Because there's just those three songs for Sex Aids on the EP and then the one Dead Katss song on the comp. So is there more than that total?
Simon: So far as I know there are no more tracks, but you know, I've been hoodwinked before. It wouldn't surprise me if they came to my door tomorrow with an album. "Hey, we recorded an album back in 1981, are you gonna release it?" I don't know. I don't think so, no. I would be very surprised. I wouldn't think they would have enough material. (*Laughter*)

MRR: Why was a new label, Not Very Nice Records, formed to release Chaotic Dischord's *Now! That's What I Call A Fuckin' Racket Vol. 1* LP?
Simon: Precisely because of that. Again, that was Shane's idea, Vice Squad's drummer. He thought it would be a big laugh to actually put it on a different label name. I mean it was all done through Riot City, but we just changed the name of the label and just put Not Very Nice Records because it wasn't really a very nice record. (*Laughter*) And in fact, later on in years, we did get into trouble with EMI America for using that title.

MRR: What was the reason for the formation of Disorder Records instead of just including them on the Riot City roster, especially when you were already releasing material by Chaos UK?
Simon: Because Disorder didn't want to go on Riot City. Disorder thought they were too hardcore to be on Riot City and Vice Squad were too poppy.
MRR: Really?
Simon: Simple as that. I love Taf from Disorder dearly. He was in a band that I did on Heartbeat Records as well. Did you know that?

MRR: No, what band was that?
Simon: He was in the X-Certs. Oh yeah, good shit.

MRR: Oh, I didn't know that. Was he older than the rest of those people?
Simon: No, I don't think so. To be honest, I ain't got a fucking clue how old Taf is now. Taf is ageless. (*Laughter*) But that's the story. They thought they should have their own identity because they were sort of a lot more hardcore-curbed than Chaos UK, I guess at that time. And they just felt that they didn't want to be part of the Riot City thing, and I was happy with that. Like I said, I'm a fan too, and I can see where they're coming from. So we decided to form a label for their band, yeah.

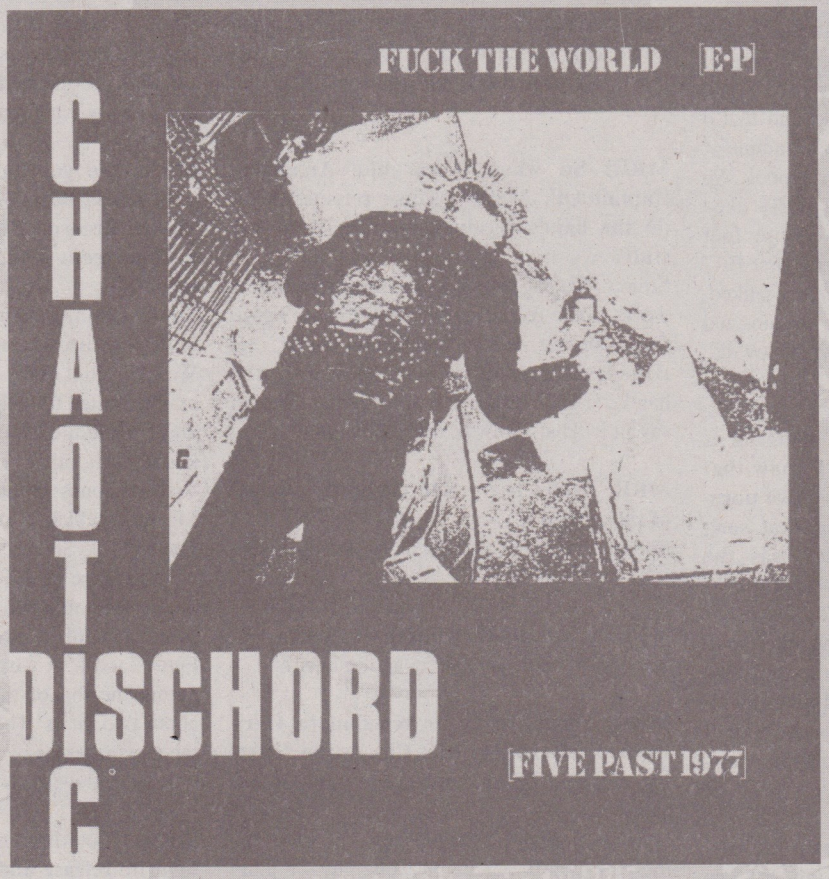
MRR: While records by Vice Squad, Abrasive Wheels, and the Ejected were selling pretty large numbers, what about releases like the Ultra Violent, Emergency, No Choice, and Underdogs? How many were pressed of records like those?
Simon: They did about 5,000. 3,000-5,000. The Ultra Violent was always one of my favorite releases on my Riot City. I thought that was a great release. And I like the Emergency one as well. Emergency was essentially part of Blitz. Did you know that?

MRR: No, I did not know that.
Simon: Yeah, yeah.

MRR: Do you know the connection there offhand by any chance?
Simon: They were all friends together basically. We did a gig with Blitz, and one of the guys said, "We've got this song, but it's not like what we did. It's a slightly different thing." And I thought "Alright, let's hear it." They sent it to me and it was really good. And, yeah, that's what that's all about.

MRR: How did you go about finding out about new bands or asking a band to do a record? Did you worry about quality control and your label's reputation?
Simon: I always put out releases that I like. Some people might be surprised by that, but everything I release I like as a piece of music, otherwise I couldn't get myself behind it and want to work with it unless I was enjoying what I was hearing. So the things that I released on Riot City were things that I liked. Simple as that.

MRR: And what about finding out about new bands or asking a band to do a record?
Simon: Well, like I said before, I was getting heaps of demo tapes. I used to sift through them, and I used to choose. I used to see bands live and if something made me think "Well, this band's got something worth capturing," then I would say, "Look, hey, that song you did three songs in was really good. Do you want to do that as a single?" It was honestly as loose as that. There was no master plan. It was just pick and choose what you find as you go along.



MRR: Were you intentionally diverse with the bands on your label? Because bands like The Varukers, Chaos UK, and Ultra Violent sound nothing like, say, No Choice for instance.
Simon: No, well, again, you see, I've always had a very diverse taste in music, but I don't think you'd find much difference of the beliefs of the guy's of the bands in Chaos UK and No Choice. They were coming from the same angle, but they just delivered it in a different way.

MRR: Did you ever consider crossing over with a band from the anarcho scene like Exit-Stance or Flux Of Pink Indians or a post-punk/goth band? No Future experimented a bit with Screaming Dead for example.
Simon: Sure, at one time, I was going to do something with SST. Yeah, I was in talks with the Black Flag people, and I was going to put out some American hardcore. Well, in fact, I did an album called *Hell Comes To Your House*. That's where that came from. I was thinking of spreading my wings and doing something different. But I decided against it because I didn't think I would have enough time to do both. Because I've always done everything on my own—I've never had a partner, never had anyone to help me do it. Everything I've ever done on Riot City has been done purely by me alone. I did it that way, not because I don't trust people, but because I just wanted to make the attempt to make my own mistakes and make my own successes. I just enjoyed doing it that way.

MRR: Were there any bands that turned down offers from you or that broke up prior to recording? How about any bands that you turned down and regret or others you wish you'd asked?
Simon: Onslaught.

MRR: Really?
Simon: Yup, I turned down Onslaught.

MRR: For the *Power From Hell* LP or for something...
Simon: Everything. They came to me in a pub with a demo, and they said, "Hey, can you listen to this?" I said "Alright." So I took it home and listened to it. I looked at the work I had to do with other releases, and I loved what I heard, but I just couldn't have the time to do it. So I turned them down.

MRR: So was that toward the end of Riot City then?
Simon: It was, yeah.

MRR: The *Power From Hell* LP is amazing, obviously.
Simon: I know, I know. It was a combination

RIOT

of the sales had probably started to drop off from Riot City and my heart probably wasn't in it enough to want to do that.

MRR: When you asked a band to do a single and they provided you with three songs, would the band go into the studio, record a bunch of songs, and then you or the band would choose what you felt to be the best three or how did that work?
Simon: No, they would go into the studio and record the three songs that we agreed prior to them going into the studio. Otherwise, they'd be in the bloody studio all week, and that'd cost a fortune. For instance, a good example of that is Mayhem, a band from Liverpool. We did a few gigs with them, and I really liked what they did. I said, "Look, choose four songs that you want to do for your first EP." And they chose the four songs that they liked. "Good, love 'em. Go into the studio and record those four songs." That's what they did. Twice they did that.

MRR: How much unreleased material is there from the Riot City era? I know that the Underdogs for instance have two unreleased sessions, Chaos UK had that song "Police Protection", and there was the Expelled 12" that had been unreleased...
Simon: That's probably it actually. There are some live things which are floating around, but that really is probably it. Obviously bands like Mayhem may have recorded more themselves. But as far as my sessions go, nope, I think everything that's probably out there now is it.

MRR: I've always wondered about the likelihood that newly unearthed Riot City era stuff could be released.
Simon: Well, I've got loads of demos from bands that I don't know what to do with. And I often wonder whether it's worth doing a CD of all these demos, but I really don't know. It's not something I've made a conscious decision to do. But there really isn't any material that I know of that we haven't exhausted.

MRR: Put that Onslaught demo out on vinyl.
Simon: Well, yeah, yeah, definitely. That's a good idea. (*Laughter*) I could even sell the cassette on eBay, I guess. (*Laughter*)

MRR: When "signing" a band, did you use contracts or just verbal agreements? Did the bands retain the rights to their songs and publishing?
Simon: I used a contract for Vice Squad because that was a bigger deal, and they also had a management team as well that required that. For all my publishing, I used not contracts, but what we call assignment forms. And you just assign that song to the Heartbeat Publishing Company and that's it. But the bands all own the rights to what they did, yeah.

MRR: So when labels like Anagram, Captain Oi!, or Step 1 Music reissues them, do the bands receive royalties from that stuff?
Simon: Yes, they do. Oh yes. Basically, how it works is the recording they do for me, I own that recording. And so that version of that song is mine or Captain Oi!'s or whoever's. The band can go and record it again, and I have no say in it. That's how the system works.

MRR: Does Cherry Red currently own all of those then?
Simon: Captain Oi! bought up the rights to Riot City Records.

MRR: When did they purchase that?
Simon: Probably five years ago, maybe?

MRR: What was your reaction to Gary Bushell referring to Riot City as the "dustbin of punk"? Did that have any impact on sales?
Simon: (*Laughter*) People can say whatever the hell they like. He's just one guy—a journalist. A lot of people read his words, but they can read between the lines. He was always into the more sort of Blitz-ier side of punk, which is fine, not a problem. And if he didn't like me, or the stuff I was putting out, then no problem. But he did like some. He liked Emergency and the Ejected and that sort of stuff.

MRR: Besides your issuing of the *Hell Comes To Your House* LP and the Channel 3 EP and Dead Kennedys stuff, there were very few American releases on British labels. What do you think was the reason for this, and how did you come to release *Hell Comes To Your House*?
Simon: When I was talking about doing this deal, it was offered to me as a precursor to doing something more. And I listened to the album and I thought some of the tracks were really good. I thought maybe this is a stepping-stone to see what the market was like and to see if it was an easy thing to work in Europe. It was quite difficult, to be honest. I think that really sort of told me that if I wanted to go down that road as well, it would be a lot more work. I would have to get someone else to come in and give me a hand, maybe move to London. And I really wasn't up for that, so that's really what put the kibosh on that.

MRR: Did you have a relationship at all with Chris Berry or Richard Jones of No Future Records, Mike Stone from Clay, or anyone from Pax, Rot, Secret, or other labels?
Simon: Yeah, I knew Mike Stone, you know, obviously, because the Wheels went to Clay. We spent a lot of time and we hung out together. He wanted to do it as amicably as he could, and I was quite happy with that. So we got to know each other. I knew Chris Berry and Richard Jones because they were both from Malvern, which is just north of Bristol, geographically. So we were quite close, and I went to some of the gigs that they used to put on. It was all good stuff. I think there was some sort of pleasant rivalry between No Future and Riot City because we were dominating the top of the independent charts for about two years. They probably *pipped* it for the most releases over us. They had Blitz who always sold well anyway, so you know.

MRR: Looking back, what was your favorite release and who was your favorite band to work with?
Simon: Favorite band... I loved working with the Ejected. They were great guys. We had a lot of fun with them. But I also loved working people like Chaos UK 'cause they were just fucking crazy, and it was always fun being around them. Like I said to you before, I was a fan of the music, I loved doing the stuff, and I look back at it all with great affection. I said before that one of my favorite releases was Ultra Violent. I just thought that was a really strong single. I like the No Choice one.

Obviously I like Vice Squad because Vice Squad was like my babies. I sort of grew up with them, they grew up with me, and it was good to see them do the sort of stuff they came out with. So yeah, I just enjoyed doing it all. Some of the gigs we did, I'd go with a lot of the bands, we did merchandise, and some of the gigs were just fantastically crazy times. It was just a really good thing to be part of, and I think I had a great life doing it.

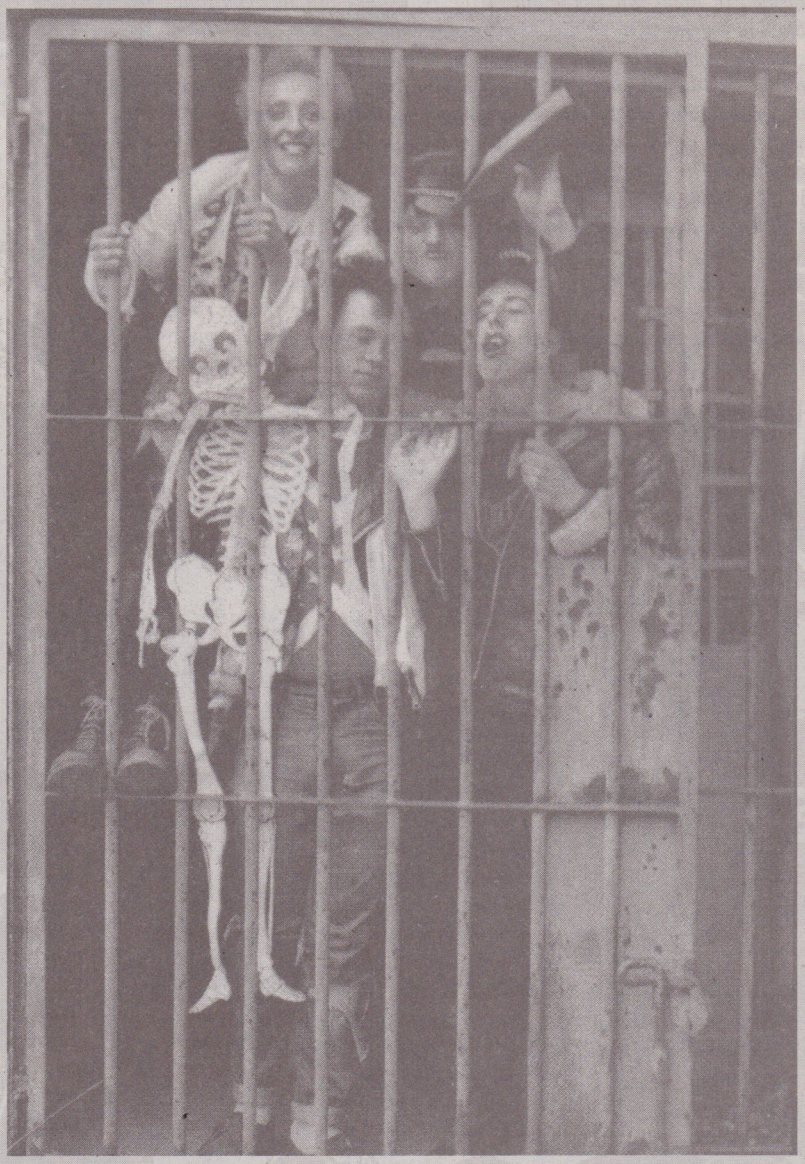
MRR: What made you decide to call it quits with the label?
Simon: It was just a combination of falling sales, and with falling sales, there wasn't so much good music being offered. I just thought maybe it's time to quit while you're nearly ahead. (*Laughter*)

MRR: All in all, you sold 154,413 7" singles, 28,203 12" EPs, and 50,220 LPs. Those numbers are quite staggering, wouldn't you say?
Simon: Well, they're not staggering if you did some of the things on No Future, it would be bigger figures. It was a staggering amount for me to sell as one guy doing a record label. I was pretty impressed with it looking back. It's even more impressive when you compare it with what people sell these days. I mean, obviously the way you buy music these days is a lot different, but to be able to sell one type of media in that quantity, it was terrific, really exciting stuff.

MRR: Once Riot City was done, did you continue to follow the hardcore scene in Bristol with labels like COR and Manic Ears?
Simon: Yeah, I was aware of them. I kind of thought that because they were doing their own thing and I wasn't really sort of part of it enough to be involved in it. So they just go on with it, and I guess I thought, "Well, I've done my bit. Now it's time for them to take over the helm, and they can take it to whatever level they can. Good luck to them all."

MRR: Are you still in contact with anyone from back then today?
Simon: A lot of people. Yeah, because people see things we released and they get in touch. "Hey, you've released such and such. Brilliant. Here it comes again." They're all really pleased that it's still out there. Because look, I mean let's face it, no one really thought 30 years later people would still be wanting to buy stuff that we did back then. That's a crazy thing. You do these things and you make the records, and you make them for the time. OK? It's a very sort of instantaneous thing. You do the record and in six or seven weeks it's gone. You go onto the next one. Who would ever think, "I'm doing this record and in 30 years time, people are going to be wanting to hear it again." You don't think like that, so it's an amazing thing to happen. I never dreamt that someone from America would want to phone me up 30 years after doing my first record wanting to talk about what I did. I'm flattered, which is what I said to you. I'm flattered and honored to talk to you about it.

MRR: Any last words or anything you'd like to say about the label?
Simon: I just really enjoyed doing it. Most of it was high—there were obviously a few lows—but with anything, it's just taking it as far as you can and making the most of it. I still made records in later years I formed a label called Trash City Records. I even did an American band called Mono Men. They were on Estrus Records. And I did a single with them. And we had a band over here called Ako, hardcore stuff. We did gigs with Sick Of It All and bands like that. So I've kept my hand in, yeah, but I've taken a back seat really. I guess because I'm a fan I always like to be involved in some small way. You can't keep an old punk rocker down.

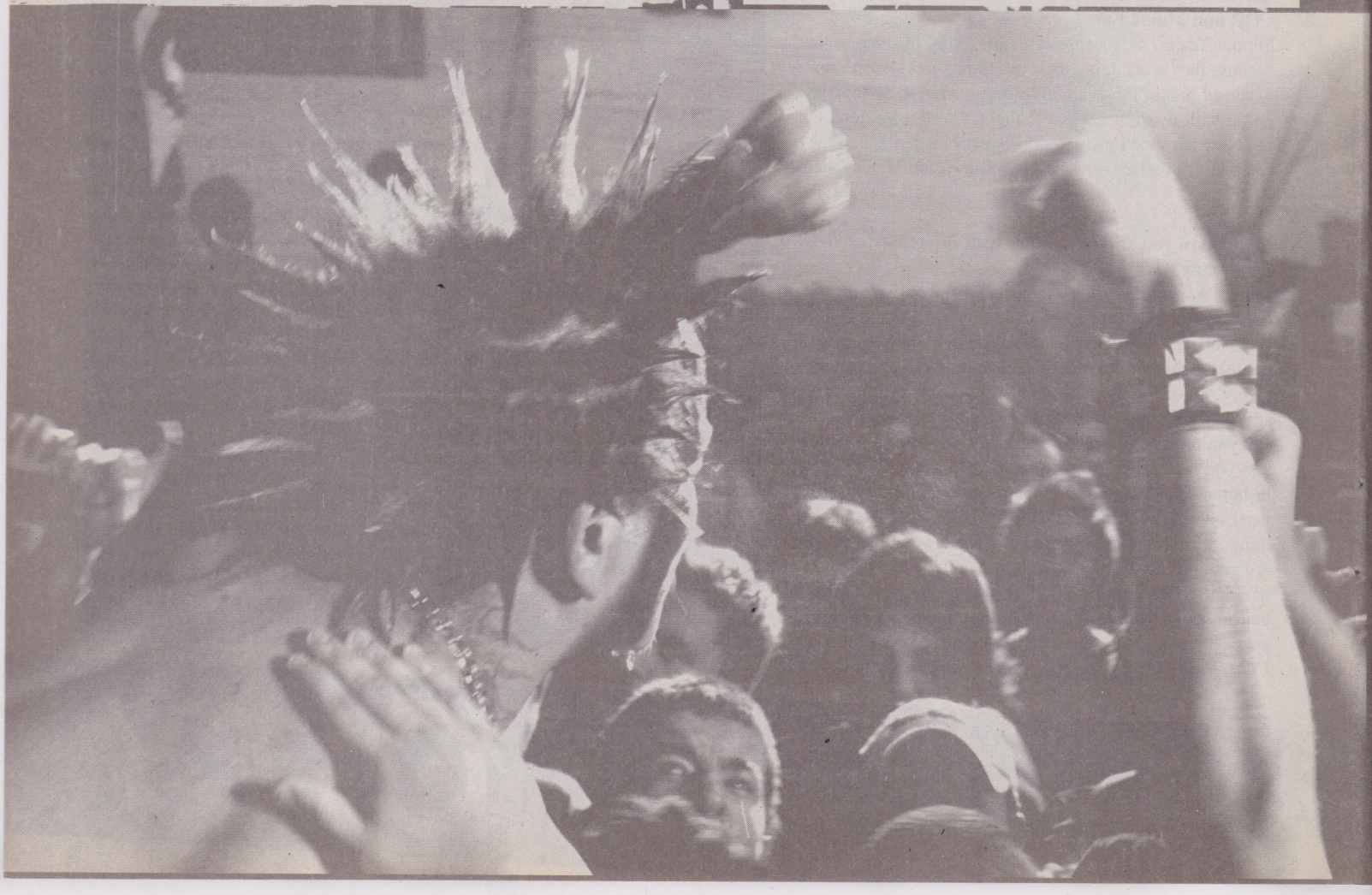


CITY

IRA (Infexion Respiratoria Aguda) is one of the first punk bands that formed in Medellín, Colombia in the mid '80s, and still continues playing independently today. They are a band with raw rhythms and socio-political lyrics that confront the worldwide situations of war, hunger, pollution, bad governments, and false religions. As a band they position themselves in respect to the possibility of living your life where you're in control in terms of self-government, liberty, and economy. The discography of IRA is made up of seven CDs and four vinyl records—all of which cover the theme of Colombian social political situation. With four tours through the USA and an uncountable number of shows in Colombia, Ecuador, and Venezuela the band has proven its staying power in the punk scene. Its members: Viola (guitar and vocals), Monica (drums and vocals), and Duvan (bass and back up vocals) say that Battalion IRA will stand firm for many more years in the worldwide punk scene.

MRR: Why IRA?

David: When we decided on the name of the band it was during a time of serious violence in our city. They killed people for whatever stupid thing and the civil situation was really chaotic. It pissed us off, made us angry, enraged. So we decided IRA was a good name for our band and at the same time we gave meaning to each of the letters of the word IRA. At first (in 1985) it meant "Ideas de Revolución Adolescente" and then later (1991-2007), "Infexion Respiratoria Aguda." This change meant that we were aware that adolescence had passed and that our faces were wrinkly, so we decided that the second name was better—it's named after a disease that will end the human race, but it's worth mentioning that we're the same IRA from 1985 to now. Oh, and we don't have anything to do with the terrorist group from Ireland—it's just a coincidence that we've got the same name, like any other coincidence in the world. For example, my name is David and you know how many Davids there are in the world? Well, the same thing happened with IRA. There are many different IRAs in the world—not just the Irish one. Let's start opening our minds please.



MRR: Many people think that South America, and Colombia in particular, is really dangerous place. What does IRA think about this and how are shows in Colombia?

David: It's true that many people think that South America and Colombia especially are dangerous, but we think that this is a generalization. Colombia has its problems with violence and has had periods of intense conflict, but that shouldn't be the only point of reference in judging it for the rest of history.

The manipulation of information has its own purpose and we've been the victims of that. In this country there are tons of people living their lives responsibly and without violence and there's many options for people in their lives. There is a really big punk scene that works really well and that's been recognized in South America, North America, and Europe for many years now, and we've gotten visits from quite a few international bands like the Misfits, Total Chaos, Molotov Cocktail (US), Envidia Kotxina, Boycott, Los Muertos de Cristo (España), Retaque, No Token (Ecuador), Reciclaje, Apatia No, Los Dolares, Doña Maldad (Venezuela), Dos Minutos, Ataque 77 (Argentina). And all these bands that have come to Colombia can tell you if they felt a sense of danger here.

Here there's lots of punk rock, hardcore, street punk, crust, noise, metal, thrash, etc bands that have big shows and also underground shows. We have big cities with five million inhabitants where, just like in London, New York, or Barcelona, the punks reproduce like rats. In Colombia, the punk shows are good, the pogo is rough, and there are a lot of punk bands that are interested in the socio-political issues that we live with everyday.

MRR: Talk about the first recordings of IRA on vinyl.

David: The first IRA recordings on vinyl were the first punk records in Colombia. In those days (1989) it was difficult to record and press a punk record here. The factories that made the first IRA records were afraid because the lyrics went against the government and the entire political and religious systems of the country. The band managed its own money to record and press these records independently. All of it was done way under budget and the rest of the production process (design, packaging, and distribution) was also done by the same bands. In the recording studios they thought we were crazy since they'd never heard punk music before. They only knew Colombian folk and it scared them to see us.

The first 7" we put out was called *Barquizidio* (1989). There were 500 copies and all of those were sold amongst friends. The second 7" was called *Atentado Terrorista* (1991), also 500 copies, and it contained songs against street terrorism in Medellín. The third vinyl was a LP, *Impotable Diversión* (1994) and those 1,000 copies went around the world with a bad recording sound, but a lot of punk fun and a little bit of drunkenness. All these analog releases were done DIY and they marked the path of the beginning of punk in Colombia.

MRR: Let's talk about the other releases on CD.

David: In the '90s it was a bit easier to record and press a punk record since many people knew about rock 'n' roll and punk, and they started to pull together the first studios with digital technology in the city. We recorded our first CD, *Cronicas de una Decada Podrida* (1996) in a home recording studio with a good friend who helped us make sure that everything turned out alright. After the arrival of the CD to Colombia no one wanted to press vinyl records, and the few pressing plants we had sold the machinery for making vinyl records and that was truly sad for us, a band who was born on vinyl. Fortunately about a year ago (2006) an IRA LP was pressed in Brazil on the São Paulo label Absurd Records, and so we were able to return to the format.

Cronicas de una decada podrida (1996) was the first CD recorded by a punk band in Colombia and was a CD that influenced many of the punk bands of the 1990s. Later we recorded *Entreamigos* (1999), *Epidemia* (2003), our live CD from CBGBs (2004), *Décadas de Libertad* (2005), and a split CD with Side by Side (2006).

MRR: We know that IRA has played in played in places like Gilman (Berkeley), El Balazo (San Francisco), and CBGBs (NY). What was it like going to the USA, and how did people in North America treat you?

David: IRA toured the USA for the first time in 2004, after eighteen years of being in the punk scene. As Colombians it's difficult to go almost anywhere in the world, and even more so with the USA because they think we're all *narcotraficantes* or that we have cocaine. The embassies set up a lot of traps so that people can't leave the country. Many of them wash their hands with us while hiding their own involvement in the arms and drug business. They're quite calm, wiping their asses with our name. We also have many punk friends in the USA, and it was for that reason that we went there to bring our sound and our message from thousands of kilometers away, because we believe it is worth it to bust down the borders. We have shared the stage with many bands from the US and we believe that we have many things in common with them. We are punks and we have similar ideas on a global scale. In our travels through the US, they treated us great. For us it was a great experience because we found that the people aren't like their government.

MRR: What kind of sound does IRA have and what other bands have influenced you?

David: Our sound is classic punk, fast, strong, and at the same time we have a little bit of harmony (without a lot of skill), screams, and choruses. We are the old school punk of Medellín where punk is played with nails, few resources, bad instruments, and a lot of energy. Our songs are formed by little musical ability and guitar distortion accompanied by hard-hitting drumbeats. Our influences are Dead Kennedys, Narcosis, Klamydia, Rövsvett, Atoxxxico, and some others I can't remember right now.

MRR: What do you think about the subject of drug addiction in society today?

David: Personally, we don't consume any type of drugs. We're not straight edge, but we're also not drug addicts. We like cold beer and a healthy lifestyle and we think that drugs affect the mind and destroy people—pushing them further from their dreams and from happiness. We don't want to be moralists because each person, as an individual, decides what to put in their bodies, but we've seen many friends of ours bow down in front of drugs and we think that the punk attitude isn't to give money to drug dealers who drive around fancy cars at the expense of tons of people who think doing drugs is punk. Today drugs are only a fashion.

MRR: What are the future plans of IRA?

David: We want to play, without pretentiousness. Write songs, make records, press them in different places, and share ideas with other bands and punks. Play here, and away from here, visit other countries, get to know people, reflect, survive, and die.

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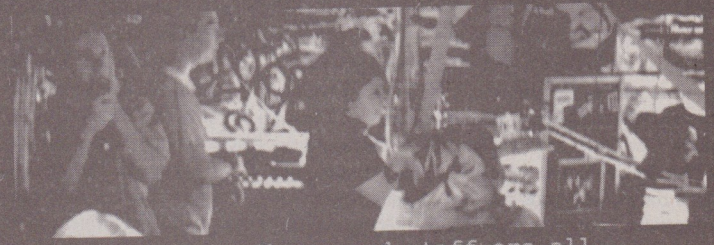

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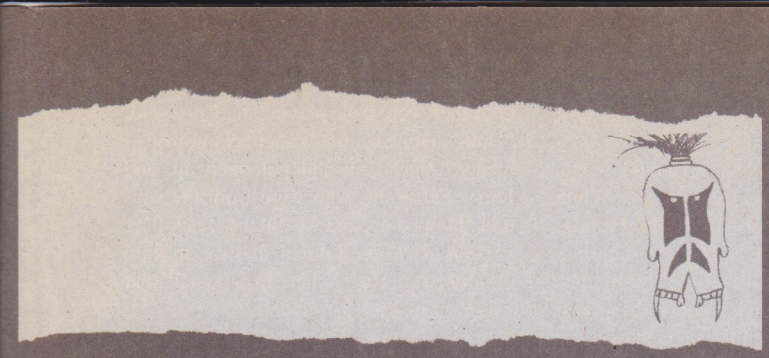


I don't know what it's like now for kids growing up in this modern age—what with the internet, MySpace, mp3s, filesharing, YouTube, and whatever else—but back in my day (the '90s) you found out about music from your friends. I'm talking about actual real-life in-person interactions (remember those?), or trading tapes through the mail. I've got a couple people whose taste in music I trust above all else, and when one of them whispers the name of a band, my ears instinctively perk up. That's what happened when I heard, "Chris, do you know this group Bum Kon?" A little subsequent research told me they were an early Colorado hardcore band, that they had an EP from 1983 called Drunken Sex Sucks, *and that they were named after a Korean policeman who went on a killing spree. Yeah, sounds like it could be cool... Now how do I track down a recording?*

Fast-forward a few years, and I make my way out to San Francisco, where Maximum Rocknroll *has a library of over 35,000 punk records. Bum Kon was one of the first I pulled out to tape—along with Raw Power* Screams from the Gutter *LP, Rattus* WC Räjähtää *LP, the Feederz* Jesus *EP, the Stalin* Mushi *LP, October Days 12", and a couple other as-of-then un-reissued classics. I don't know what I liked more about Bum Kon—the breakneck-speed blasts of adolescent hardcore punk fury, or the genius art on the cover of the EP.*

I soon landed a job working at one of the few remaining major independent music distributors in the country here in SF, where among my co-workers was not only Andrew Murphy, former Denver resident and proprietor of the Colorado-centric Smooch Records, but Bob MacDonald, former vocalist of the band Bum Kon. It was during the mastering process for Local Anesthetic, *Andrew's compilation of early Colorado punk singles, that the complete, unmastered, and largely unheard-since-1983 session for the EP turned up. I expected it to be good, but fuck... this thing needed to be released. Though a couple other labels were interested, Andrew's Smooch imprint was the natural choice. I was thrilled when he asked if MRR wanted to co-release it! Now, with the complete 25-track 1983 recording session out on CD, and the vinyl version coming later this month, we thought it was the perfect time to do an article for the magazine.*

Andrew and myself conducted the following interview with Bob MacDonald and Johnny Meggitt in August of 2008. Besides doing vocals for Bum Kon throughout their entire career (the EP and two LPs) as well as the illustrious and infamous Bad Circus, Bob more recently sang for the band Mr. & Mr. & Mr. & Mr. Evil, and fronts Hank IV (LP out soon on Siltbreeze!). Johnny is also a veteran of the early Colorado hardcore scene, having been in Child Abuse, Acid Ranch, Brother Rat, and Bad Circus. He was also the vocalist of the now-defunct Subtractions, and currently plays in the Get Offs. We spoke about Bum Kon, their contemporaries in the Colorado scene at the time, Bob and Johnny's experiences getting into punk in Denver, and quite a bit more. Just prior to the interview, the four of us watched an old video shot at a show in Fort Collins, CO, in 1984. The footage featured performances by Bum Kon, Acid Ranch, and Peace Core, and interviews with members of the band and the audience.

Introduction by Chris Hubbard.

MRR: Do you want to start by sharing your memories of what you just saw? That was 1984.

Johnny: That was '84, so a lot had happened by then. And a lot of that happened in Boulder before I saw Devo on *Saturday Night Live* or whatever got me into it, y'know, which is when I first started thinking, "huh, maybe *not* the Stones." But there were already people in Boulder who were so far ahead of us, partying so much harder than us. *[laughter]*

Bob: I got into punk rock through Gerry O'Reilly. I worked at this hamburger restaurant called Round the Corner, and this dude—his family, they had moved from Belfast, 'cause his brother was in some trouble, and his dad got a teaching job in Colorado. He was all into the Stranglers and the Stiff Little Fingers, and he took me under his wing.

Johnny: And his family—it was Gerry and his brother Devon—they were taken out of Northern Ireland because of the IRA and the whole war, basically.

Bob: Well, as his brother always said, "I got into some trouble and had to leave."

Johnny: And their parents didn't want him to be in the IRA, so they just became straight-up punk, y'know? Like, Stiff Little Fingers to them was like the Beatles to me at that time.

Bob: Gerry took me to see the Ramones and the Dictators.

Johnny: That was probably 1980.

Bob: '79 or '80. I got into an argument with Handsome Dick Manitoba once about when it was. *[In H.D. Manitoba voice:]* "I would know." *[laughter]*

MRR: So are you two both from Colorado originally? Did you grow up there?

Bob: Yeah. He was born in Dugway, Utah, on an army nerve-gas testing base, and I was born in Wichita, Kansas.

Johnny: We both grew up in Denver, and we met in high school, the same one where a lot of those people in that video went—Erik Oberhausen, Jenny Thero, Mike Serviolo, Chris Steele, all the bands.

Bob: We all went to the same high school.

Johnny: So it wasn't like we all got into punk and then met in high school—we were all getting into new wave and punk *while* we met, and were kind of teaching each other, like, "Wow, have you heard Minor Threat, have you heard this or that?" Y'know? Because we *didn't* come up in '77 or '78. I got to high school in 1980. It was a short hop, for me, from the Monkees to all of a sudden being at a matinee show and seeing Black Flag.

MRR: Was there a previous generation, like a '77 generation?

Johnny: Definitely. In Denver, it was more of a new wave thing, but in Boulder there were punk bands. We never heard them, we just saw their remnants, their little brothers or sisters that came up in the same punk scene that we came up in, really.

Bob: There was the punk scene, and then, as we came, that was the hardcore scene.

Johnny: Yeah, it definitely wasn't a punk scene, it was a hardcore scene. And it was White Trash, who were Boulder-based; The Frantix, who were Aurora-based, a Denver suburb—those guys were from all over the 'burbs. The suburban guys were playing more true hardcore; Bum Kon was the only city band that was really playing hardcore, 'cause Peace Core was punk…

MRR: What about Child Abuse?

Johnny: Child Abuse, y'know…

Bob: That was punk.

Johnny: That was punk. That's the only word for it when everybody's playing on the same root note.

Bob: They had trashcans for drums. Before Jason could get a drum set, they played trashcans.

Johnny: I remember he was like 14; he got his first drum set and we thought, "I wonder if he can play that thing," and he sat down and just was like… *[makes drumming noises]* "Yeah, I'm ready." And we went, "Well, he can play."

Child Abuse

Bob: We used to just form zillions of bands, just for fun. Johnny and I were in… You were in S.R.A. right?

Johnny: Skaters Rule Always. *[laughter]* One hundred songs in fifteen minutes.

Bob: We would play on our skateboards with helmets and pads.

Johnny: There was that skateboard-guitar down there than inspired it. What was that guy's name? He played with Steve Lobdell, who's a pretty accomplished guy, in a band called Signal 30. Bart…

Bob: Oh yeah, Bart Davenport.

Johnny: There were two Barts—Bart Davenport…

Bob: Oh yeah, the rat…

Johnny: No, that was the other Bart, that was the weasel. There were these weird little inside things in the scene, like there was the Weaselhood—that was Nate, that was the three of us, we all had weasel faces… *[laughter]*

MRR: So, was Bum Kon your first band, or was that just another in the series of bands at the time?

Bob: No, my first was Problem Youth, and then they kicked me out 'cause I wasn't punk enough. As I recall, it was 'cause I started wearing these Chinese slippers and I had a trenchcoat. *[laughter]* And then Dan, the bass player—he and I had started that band—he moved from bass to vocals and they changed their name to Peace Core. And then Erik, the bass player of Bum Kon, and I—we'd been good friends in junior high and hung out together—there was a Hüsker Dü all-ages matinee, and after they were done playing, they just said, "Does anyone want to jam, play our instruments?" And Erik and I jumped up, and Larry and Mark, who were from the suburbs, jumped up, and we did the Black Flag version of "Louie Louie," and we all kind of looked at each other, like, "well, that was kind of cool." *[laughter]*

Johnny: People danced… I mean, talk about a good first show—you played one or two songs, and people liked it.

MRR: So that was '82, probably.

Bob: '81, '82. It might have been '81.

Johnny: It probably was late '81, 'cause you guys—remember? You guys were Reagan Youth for a little bit.

Bob: Yeah, that was after I left. They were Reagan Youth, and then they were Peace Core when they found out there was a Reagan Youth already. *[laughter]*

Johnny: Didn't Mark and Larry…

Bob: Oh yeah, they were in a *different* Reagan Youth. *[more laughter]*

Johnny: They were in a different Reagan Youth. There were a lot of Reagan Youths.

Bob: Apparently some of our songs were written by that other dude that I didn't know about, until he found out…

Johnny: Those guys were jamming together, and you and Oberhausen had gone to high school together…

Bob: And junior high.

Johnny: You went to Led Zeppelin school together and marijuana school together. *[laughter]*

Bob: Yeah, that's true, then I stopped hanging out with those guys when they started listening to Rush. *[laugher]* I just didn't get it. And then we didn't hang out the first year of high school 'cause they were listening to Rush on the South Lawn and I was getting into punk. That summer, I went up to the Reservoir to see if there was anything going on…

Johnny: Congress Park.

Bob: Yeah, and they were like, "Bob!" I didn't recognize them 'cause they all had

short hair. We all started hanging out again.

Johnny: Congress Park Reservoir, you can see it in *Dazed and Confused*. It has a tower. It's the same thing as that scene in that movie where stoners and freakers would just roll up a keg, and you'd sit there and it was really that scene that turned a lot of people onto punk rock and new wave, 'cause it was like… God, even at 14, you're like, "this *sucks*," y'know? This is just a bunch of hippies getting high. That's really what the scene sprung out of, though—the hate of stoners, I think. At least for kids in my neighborhood that got into new wave and punk rock. It was like, we're just too young to hang out with those '70s freakers, y'know—they just sort of looked down on us—and then here was something you had that was *yours*. And the first thing was Devo on *Saturday Night Live* playing "Satisfaction." I remember watching it with a couple friends, going, "wow, this is so much better than the Stones." *[laughs]* It was like, "we don't need pot, we just need beer and new wave!"

Bob: For me, that little spark *was* Devo, 'cause Erik's dad had "Jocko Homo," and we'd come home after junior high, we'd go to the Oberhausens' house and dip into his parents' weed stash, and get really baked on his dad's homemade bong. His dad had cool records and brought home the Devo record, and Erik was like, "check out *this* weird thing." We got really baked and put it on, and were like, "wow…"

Johnny: He'd come in, though—we'd be listening to something really good, like Black Flag or Circle Jerks or something, and he'd come in and be like, "no, no, you guys gotta listen to *this*," and put on Bad Company. *[laughter]* It was like, dad was going to school us. *[more laughter]*

Bob: No, it was like that with Zeppelin—he was mad that we liked Zeppelin, and he was like *[in Dad voice:]* "No, the Yardbirds." *[laughter]*

Johnny: We digress…

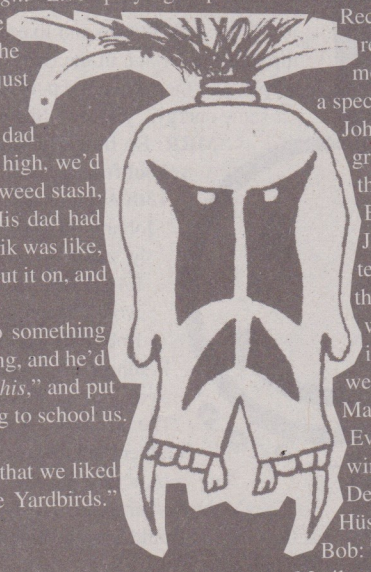
MRR: I remember one time you told me about listening to *Damaged* for the first time…

Johnny: Yeah, with Mike Serviolo. We threw almost all my other records out the window. And then we went and picked them back up, 'cause my mom was like, "pick those up!" *[laughs]* And we trashed my bedroom, which was really cheesy… I remember Bob or someone else at school talking about *Damaged*. I'd heard Black Flag at parties and stuff, but I'd never bought the 7-inch or anything at that point…

Bob: For me, I listened to all the English punk rock stuff, me and Dan from Peace Core…

Johnny: Everybody did, originally.

Bob: …and then this guy that I'd known in elementary school, Geoff Paxton whose family had moved away, he moved back and he was into punk. I went over to his house, and he had the *Nervous Breakdown* 45 with a big chunk missing out of it. *[laughter]* He was like, "check this out," and put it on, and I was just hooked. Then I started… We had Wax Trax Records, which was great because they carried every new record, every punk record you wanted, so right then, any money I had, it was like—LA hardcore, y'know? They had a special section for LA hardcore. It was good.



Johnny: Yeah, I started shopping at Wax Trax in like fourth grade or something. I'd go there and get Beatles records, the Monkees, the Kinks…

Bob: Zeppelin bootlegs…

Johnny: That day, after school, Mike Serviolo and I listened to *Damaged*, both sides, and we were looking through my records for something else to play, and there was not much else in there. *[laughs]* We just kept playing it over and over again and jumping around my room, and we started throwing all my old rock records out. *[laughs]* Man, I wish I had those back now—some of them, y'know? Even the Beatles, who I loved growing up, were just out the window. Black Flag, I think that changed everything. In Denver, too, when they played that matinee show, before Hüsker Dü, or right around that time…

Bob: They were the first touring band…

Johnny: Marilyn, from the Mercury Café, who was just a stalwart of, like, alternative thought in Denver at the time, was smart enough to go, "Hey, all the kids want to come to the show." So she had a matinee show, all ages, which was *unheard of* back then. We assumed we'd be watching from the

window, y'know? Which we used to do. You would go to Wallaby's and watch the Kamikaze Clones or the Young Weasels play from outside, 'cause you couldn't go in because you were a kid. You'd just watch from the window. And at that Black Flag show, we got in. And it was *Black Flag*. *[laughs]*

Bob: If you had a fake ID, it wouldn't matter, 'cause they all knew who you were. They were like, "I know that's not your ID." *[laughter]*

Johnny: That was so fun—that was before any kind of skinhead scene. Henry sensed the moment, too, and he started pulling us on stage, and we all sung "Louie Louie" with him. That started everybody thinking.

Bob: A great thing about living in Denver then was if a band did come through, because it's in the middle of nowhere and not really on a good touring route, they tended to take days off. So the bands would hang around for two or three days at a time and you'd get to know them and hang out. It was like that with Black Flag—they'd be there for a couple days—and the Misfits. You'd get to hang around and know them better, and it was inspiring—these guys were the real deal and they were doing it, and it was like, you can do this too.

Johnny: And they were very nice to us. All those people, all those SST bands.

Bob: They would come to our practices…

Johnny: Yeah, and you would jam with D. Boon and Mike Watt—they'd be like, "Hey, little kids with equipment, let's play with them!" *[laughs]* Y'know? Even the Misfits were really nice to us. You heard all these horrible… We were terrified of them, y'know? And they *were* gigantic, compared to us. *[laugher]* But they were really nice to us 'cause we were little kids who were earnest and wanted to be part of it.

Bob: That's how Child Abuse got one of their first shows—Danzig or Jerry Only went down to see them practice, and said, "Hey, you guys are opening for us tonight."

Johnny: Well, they didn't like the fact that the band that was opening for them was called Peace Core. *[laughter]* They were like, "This isn't going to happen." That was our friends' band, and we'd only played one show in Chris Steele's garage for his birthday…

Bob: You were guppies.

Johnny: We were guppies; it was with the Frantix—which we didn't realize was a good show when we played it, y'know? *[laughs]* We were like, "the Frantix?" But Gary saw us and told Ricky, and Ricky said, "kids playing punk rock, cool—let 'em play, even though they suck, 'cause they have the energy and the spirit."

Bob: They called you kids, but they were only like two years, three years older than you.

Johnny: Yeah, but they were *worlds* away, y'know?

Bob: They had *equipment*. *[laughter]*

Johnny: But Danzig came and sat and watched us practice, and he asked us, "What are you guys called?" We said, "Child Abuse," and he was like, "That's the band, Peace Core is out, Child Abuse is in." And our friend, Tom Headbanger, who should be mentioned here, 'cause he was a big part of the Denver scene—there wouldn't have been a Denver scene if it weren't for a few linchpin people like Tom Headbanger, Nancy Kennedy… Tom Kennedy, 'cause he kind of connected all of us in high school to his mother, who was friends with Black Flag somehow, through some hippie California thing, and then to the Misfits, who would stay at our friends' house, and we would all just hang out all day. And that house had a practice space in the basement, and so we got to play with these people, y'know? It was very lucky.

Bob: Denver I'm sure was like most other places at that time—you had to invent everything every day and you had to make your own scene happen because it wasn't going to happen otherwise. Like he said, Nancy Kennedy, who was our friend Tom's mom, she let the bands crash there, she let us all practice there, and then when there was no place to play, she sunk her whole life's savings into opening an all-ages club so all of us would have a place to play and touring bands would have a place to play.

Johnny: And it was her dream to open her own bar, but she was like, "You know what? I'll open my own all-ages punk rock club." Hmm, in Denver at that time? Maybe not the best idea. It was a great place, it was a great venue, but it was when the skinhead thing was getting really strong. There's not much security in a place like that, and it was a place for them to go and be their worst. It was the spotlight of the scene, so that was when the skinhead thing got really ugly in Denver.

MRR: What was that place called?

Johnny: Kennedy's Warehouse.

Bob: And you know, to make it happen, she had to move her and Tom into the warehouse to live as well, because she couldn't afford to pay rent on a house and pay rent on the space.

Johnny: Nancy had balls, Nancy definitely had chutzpah. *[laughs]* Don't print that, she'll kill me—but she definitely had balls. She was not afraid to take on the challenge, and she ended up selling it and buying 7 South—but, y'know, her whole life, she had been a waitress, and was always the smartest and funniest person in the room, and she was like, "Why am I doing this? I should own something."

Bob: Her daughter, Lorraine, was one of the first punks in Denver, and her mom would go to shows. Nancy slamdanced before anyone I'd ever met.

Johnny: Yeah, she missed the hippie days, and she was really into the anarchy aspect of it—"let's fuck shit up and live on a commune or whatever," y'know? 'Cause she went through a marriage in the early '60s, and was like, "fuck it," came out the other side a hippie, and then when the punk thing happened, she was like, "Oh, this is great, it's that same energy," y'know? She was really great to everybody.

MRR: So how did your guys' involvement with punk blossom from high school fun to getting involved with bands and Wax Trax and Mercury 13th Avenue and stuff?

Johnny: In a town as small as Denver—it was spread out, but it was really small, so anybody who was doing anything semi-alternative at the time knew each other, and even Boulder punks and Denver punks would hang out…

Bob: Fort Collins punks…

Johnny: It crossed over so much, because we'd hang out at Wax Trax, get jobs at Wax Trax, everybody at Wax Trax would go to the Ogden Theatre to see a movie like *Clockwork Orange* at midnight, and all the Boulder punks would be there, we'd meet these guys—"Hey, we're all wearing motorcycle jackets," y'know? "Yours are newer, you suck." *[laughter]* They'd throw stuff at us. The Boulder punks—it's so funny, 'cause you think of Denver as the city and Boulder as the hippie town—but the Boulder punks, that's who I was afraid of. *[laughs]*

Bob: They were a lot more…

Johnny: They were hardcore, they were doing heroin, they were breaking into cars…

Bob: Yeah, they were walking a different walk, and talking a different talk.

bum-kon™

Johnny: Well, they were walking the walk *and* talking the talk. Certain members of White Trash, and before that I think they were called Annex Red… There was a show at the Free School in like 1980—oh no, it was the "No Fun '81" show, right at the beginning of 1981—and Annex Red played, and another band played, one of the guys from the Frantix, Mark, was in that. Dogmeat was another band on that bill, that's why I went. We thought the cops would bust it, and that would be the last hardcore show ever in Colorado—that's how square and restrictive Colorado was at the time. We thought, "as soon as the cops see this, they're never going to let it happen again."

Bob: But it was also easy in Denver to keep it away from the cops, because it's spread out, and there were just places you'd go and they would never know. One of the best places in Denver to play was called the Packing House. It was an old packing house for cattle, and somebody—I don't even know who had access to it, but there'd be shows out there and it was so out in the boonies that no one would know what was going on.

Johnny: That was the other thing about Denver—it had a really healthy industrial music scene. Those were shows we would go to; we'd go see Human Head Transplant, bands like that, and Pounding Limbo—I think it was those guys, and Tom Headbanger, who discovered the Packing House. Tom Headbanger, if you hung out with this guy… He did a lot; he started a paper called the *Rocky Mountain Fuse*, which was definitely the first fanzine in Colorado, and then he started promoting shows and stuff. But he liked to do industrial walks—there was a huge industrial district, right outside of downtown back then—he'd walk through and he'd try and find percussion instruments or something he could use for art of some sort, or dead cats for the bones… *[laughs]* He was a strange guy, but he was a great guy and a smart guy.

Bob: He put on a somewhat famous Einstürzende Neubauten show in a junkyard. He was like, "Well, I can do it in the Packing House, and I can sell as many tickets as I can"—they wanted a $2,000 guarantee—"or I can sell a hundred tickets at $25"…

Johnny: Well, Neubauten said they wanted to play outside…

Bob: So he managed to get a junkyard to let it happen, and the stage was a flatbed truck. Shane from Happy World's grandfather, I believe, owned a heavy equipment rental company, so they let them have whatever they wanted, like earth-pounders… *[laugher]*

Johnny: It was awesome, they made great music with it.

Bob: And he sold a hundred tickets, and all the tickets were the bones of a dog, painted black with a Neubauten logo and your number. I got a jawbone, it's in my room.

Johnny: He boiled a dog and a cat, roadkill he found… We hope it was roadkill! *[laughter]*

Bob: No, he always used roadkill—he wasn't cruel to animals.

Johnny: No, he wasn't cruel, no…

Bob: But once they were dead, they were fair game. *[laughter]*

Johnny: Yeah. And he painted the bones. So, it was smart, because they wanted to play outside, they wanted to use all this heavy equipment—they had all these demands and wanted all this money—he said, "Let's get a hundred people in there, charge them $25 each," which was…oh my god, in those days?

Bob: But those hundred people really wanted to be there, there weren't people going just to make the scene…

Johnny: In those days, you'd really be pushing the envelope with a $5 show—if you liked *all* the bands playing at the Rainbow Music Hall and it was $5, you'd be like, "Uh, *maybe*…" *[laughter]* You know, $25… But Tom was smart, because you'd get this *ticket*, and it was so Neubauten, and you're one of a hundred people to witness it. And people are going to show up, so there's going to be a crowd for them. And they didn't disappoint. They lit the stage on fire…

Bob: There were bonfires going…

Johnny: They lit it on fire with kerosene, 'cause kerosene flames shoot up really high and burn out really quick. They lit up a bunch of kerosene, and then they turned on the jackhammers, and…

Bob: …went to town. *[laughter]*

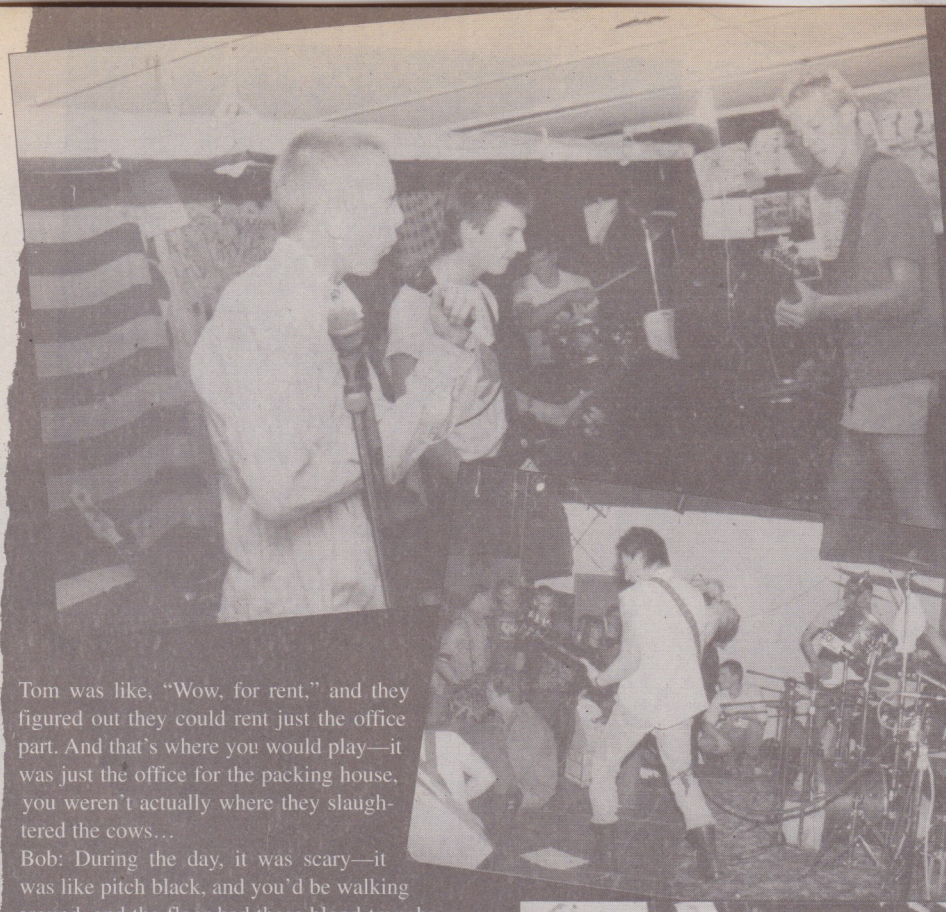
Johnny: That was really the end of the beginning, you know what I mean? After that, everybody was like…

Bob: *[dejected voice:]* "Yeah, now I've seen it." *[laughter]*

Johnny: We went through so many morphings of the scene, and it was like, "Wow…" What year was that? '84?

Bob: That's when things started crossing over. There was metal coming in, there was industrial coming in, rock stuff… People started blending different types of underground music together a lot more. Before, it was like, "Oh, you're hardcore, or…" So that made everything a lot more interesting. With Bum Kon, we played with Motörhead, we played with the Swans when they were in their "*Kkkkuurrrghhh*" stage… We got asked to open for the Swans by Headbanger purely because they needed to borrow gear and we were the only ones with big amps at that point. We had the power. *[laughter]*

Johnny: I think it was on one of those industrial walks with one of those guys—Paul Dickerson, if I'm not mistaken—where him and Tom Headbanger stumbled across this packing house, and



Tom was like, "Wow, for rent," and they figured out they could rent just the office part. And that's where you would play—it was just the office for the packing house, you weren't actually where they slaughtered the cows…

Bob: During the day, it was scary—it was like pitch black, and you'd be walking around, and the floor had these blood-troughs. It was just really… To actually be in there, it was like, "*Gaahh*" *[laughter]* You'd definitely never go in there at night, it was too scary.

MRR: Well, you're talking about the other influences coming in—was that a reaction to the skinhead thing that was going on?

Bob: Well, Bum Kon went from that super fast thing, to… We just got heavier and heavier, and by the end there was, like, keyboards involved… *[a big laugh from Johnny]* There was! But that was the musicians in the band just getting better and better at playing, because… All the bands in Denver, the musicians just got really good, because there's nothing else to do but *practice*, so everybody is just constantly playing. And they got more and more proficient with their instruments and started bringing in other influences.

Johnny: I think the reason why the Human Head Transplant, industrial scene and the hardcore punk scene merged into one big Fluid scene eventually—when the Fluid just kind of dominated everything by '85 or '86—is all the people just wanted to keep hanging out and playing music; it really wasn't about what side of the line you were on. First it was like, "Are you new wave or are you punk?" Then it was like, "Are you a skin or are you not?" And then by that time it was just all smart people who wanted to play music and try and set up shows that could be violence-free, basically, 21-plus shows, maybe sneak in your friends.

Bob: Shows got so…

Johnny: It got really dangerous.

Bob: As the scene grew, there was this jock element that came in. There were the skinheads, and they got *violent*. Violent to the point where it was like, "I don't want to go see that band 'cause it's just not gonna be fun." And of course there was the thing when the punk scene itself was young, jocks and stuff would come to a party and you'd all get your asses kicked on the way out, outside…

Johnny: Oh, it was definitely a big decision to shave your head, y'know? It wasn't just self-expression, you thought, "Now I'm a faggot." That's what you were in Colorado in 1980, '81. They didn't think of you as new wave or a punk rocker, they would think, "There's a homosexual," and you would hear the breaks screech on the pickup truck, and you'd run. Grown men would fuck with you.

Bob: I weighed 120 pounds, and the day my mom made me get braces, I was so angry about that—but, you know, I *needed* them—but I was like, "I'm a punk rocker, I have to get braces?" *[laughter]* So I came home with a mohawk, and then my mom…

Johnny: *[laughing]* That was a good look—the mohawk and braces. It really was. You looked like a very small, angry Robert DeNiro in *Taxi Driver*.

Bob: My mom's just got such a way about her—when I came home with the mohawk and braces, she just looked at me and sighed and said, "Why can't you just be bald like the rest of your friends?" *[laughter]*

Johnny: But then she told you to never change your actual hairline, like when I used to cut it up here. *[points to the side of his head above his ear]*

Bob: Yeah, she was like, "no, no." 'Cause my mom really hated the whole punk rock thing at first—we would argue, and it was a big problem. And then she realized that I never got arrested, that I was doing something creative, and she came more to terms with it. And as it went along more, she told me she had been out to lunch with "the ladies who lunch," and one lady was like, "Oh, you know, my daughter's getting into this thing called punk rock," and my mom got to be all cool and be like, "Pssh, my kid's been doing that for years." *[laughter]*

Johnny: It really was like, if you were going to shave your head and cut the sleeves off your *Leave It to Beaver* button-up shirt, or get a Discharge t-shirt…

Bob: You were going to brand yourself as a target to get your ass kicked *every single day*.

Johnny: …you were kind of coming out to your

family and friends, to your older brothers, neighbors, whatever. You weren't gay, but you still had to come out as a punk, you know? Or a new waver—even then it was like, "Wow, what'd she do to her hair?" The littlest thing back then, even a rat-tail—it was such a rebellious endeavor.

Bob: I don't think… I assume it's not like that now, if you're punk rock—you don't regularly get your ass kicked just for doing that. But I got my ass kicked fucking up and down… I got stomped good.

Johnny: A lot of running…

Bob: But, you know, it was worth it. *[laughs]*

Johnny: Well, it's like, "this is it." You really felt committed to it. That's when you started listening to Crass, y'know, like, "This makes sense. Fuck yeah. Fuck the system!" *[laughs]* "The system's kicking my ass."

Bob: You'd walk down the street in Denver, and a businessman would call you out. It was like, what the fuck?

Johnny: Yeah, in the mall that day, that guy was like, "Looks like a couple faggots." But I shouldn't have said what I said. *[laughs]*

Bob: What'd you say?

Johnny: "This faggot's got a gun."

Bob: Oh.

Johnny: *[laughing]* Then he chased us to the escalator. And we were coming down the escalator, no shit, and the guy came behind us—in a business suit, but he was kind of ripped—and he threw a kick at me, and I was kind of like, "woah!" and I moved out of the way…

Bob: It was like, "What is wrong with you? We're kids!"

Johnny: I mean, we were dressing way beyond punk rock at that time—we were wearing really bright colors. *[laughing:]* Bob was wearing black pants with big rose patterns on them, looking like someone's curtains, kinda parachute-cut, with a white dress shirt and a beret.

Bob: The *Rocky Mountain News* wanted to do a story on "punks"—kind of like a human-interest story. They called Wax Trax and they got my name, I talked to them, and they wanted to do an interview and a photoshoot. So I just picked every wild-looking, weird, non-punk looking thing I could find, and they were like, *[in square voice:]* "Well, you're not really what we're looking for." I was like, "You called me, man."

Johnny: It's a great photo. They took a bunch of people from East High School, and they shot all these kids against a brick wall, like in an alley

way—you, Jenny Thero, Mike Serviolo, Geoff Paxton. Definitely punk rockers, but you know…

Bob: At the beginning, there was the suburban people—the Frantix—but almost all the *Denver* hardcore scene was all at East High School. Home of the East High Angels.

Johnny: Rock the house. *[laughter]*

Bob: And after school, everybody went to Tom Kennedy's house, and depending on the day of the week, it was somebody's band's day to practice, and everybody would hang out and watch the practice, and get a little couch of death in…

Johnny: It was so much better than being on the football team, which is what we originally went for—but we were too small…

Bob: I didn't. I played soccer.

Johnny: But we all grew up playing sports and stuff, and that's really how you met girls. And it's that old cliché, but Tom Kennedy was like, "if we start a punk band, maybe we can meet girls!" Pretty soon, you'd walk from East High School with your friends to go jam, to play music, and there'd be a group of girls *and* boys following you, and it was like a little show after school at Tom Kennedy's house…

Bob: Girls hated me until I was punk rock.

Johnny: Me too.

Bob: Junior high, that was like *Saturday Night Fever* and disco—you had to be macho, and it helped if you were Italian, and I was neither of those things, not even close.

Johnny: Or a blond, golden hippie dude.

Bob: That was Oberhausen.

Johnny: Yeah, he had the long locks.

Bob: It wasn't me. It wasn't until I got into punk rock that all of a sudden I became *interesting* to the opposite sex.

Johnny: Yeah, it definitely spurred the scene along. *[laughs]*

Bob: *[sarcastically]* It was a wild scene, baby! *[laughter]*

MRR: Can you talk some about Local Anesthetic and what they did?

Johnny: Everything. That was another linchpin—Duane Davis and Local Anesthetic.

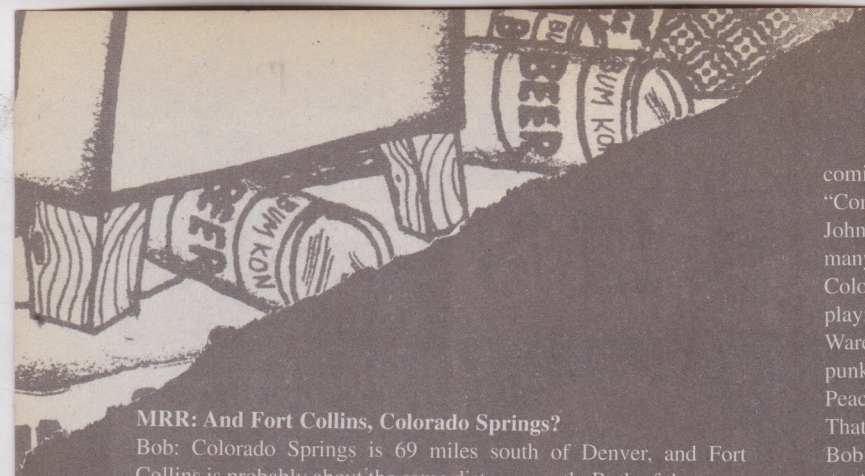
Bob: Duane was the co-owner of Wax Trax, and he had the Local Anesthetic record label—there's the great *Local Anesthetic* compilation that Andrew just put out—and he just wanted to document bands he liked in the scene. But it was also a fanzine and a Wax Trax promotional tool, and that was great, 'cause there'd be an interview with the out-of-town band that just came through, pictures of your little scene, and when it came out, everybody would be like, "Ohhh…" and want to see who was in it.

Johnny: Duane Davis was such a savvy guy—he realized, "Let's document some of this stuff." He had been through the '60s movement, and he was like, "You got to document this shit." We never really sat down and talked about it, but I worked with the guy for a really long time and I think that was his inspiration for doing all that. And then he's putting friends' records out, and other friends have good bands… He wasn't making any money off these records—it was more of a vanity project.

Bob: He was a total father figure to me, one of the first men from his generation that didn't make me feel like a piece of shit. You know? He gave me a job at the record store, which I hung out at all the time. He was always like, "You can do this, you can do that." He was also sarcastic and biting, which was the style I responded to, so I really looked up to him, and I valued the friendship. It wasn't just employee and owner. He was just an all-around great guy. Still is.

MRR: I wanted to ask this earlier, but—for someone who's not from Colorado—how close are Denver and Boulder to each other?

Bob: 20 or 30 miles. Back then, though, it seemed far. And, you know, not a lot of people had a car, so getting to Boulder was not easy. I used to steal my mom's car at night so we could go to Boulder.



MRR: And Fort Collins, Colorado Springs?

Bob: Colorado Springs is 69 miles south of Denver, and Fort Collins is probably about the same distance north. Both of those are small college towns.

Johnny: You would go play shows there and stuff, and people had their own little tiny scenes, but most people who were serious about bands, it seemed like they moved to Denver—all of a sudden they were staying at someone's apartment…

Bob: For what little was going on in Colorado Springs, there was more there than Fort Collins. But there was a place just outside Fort Collins, a Grange Hall that you could rent, and there were amazing shows there. Everybody from Colorado Springs, Denver, Boulder—everybody would drive up for those shows. That was almost on the Wyoming border.

Johnny: That was the funny thing—the Fort Collins Grange people tried to unite the whole scene, but they were just too far out. This was pre-internet—it was a long-distance phone call to get a show together. It was just too far out of it. It seemed like, in those days, it was Boulder until the early '80s, and then it was Denver, really. When the Denver scene started to flourish, Boulder bands seemed to move, and the other scene died out—there wasn't really much happening in Boulder, except more like pop and stuff.

Bob: Boulder, though—earlier, there was a scene there, and there was a club there that would do shows. We played with the Dead Kennedys in Boulder, I think at the Blue Note; I saw the UK Subs and… What's that great band? With Animal?

Johnny: Oh, Anti-Nowhere League.

MRR: Oh, jeez. *[they suck!]*

Bob: Anti-Nowhere League. Great show. They were awesome. *[laughter]*

Johnny: I missed that one. I loved that band, too.

Bob: That was one of the few punk reunion shows I've gone to—three, four, five years ago, I went to see Anti-Nowhere League here, and I couldn't believe they were really just disappointing. I was *shocked*. *[lots of laughter]* It just wasn't the same, dude.

Johnny: To us, by the mid-'80s, they were fun, y'know? Everybody listened to the record, everybody played it, everybody sang along—it was like a big inside joke.

Bob: The dude had a beard, how could you not love that? *[laughter]* I have their CD on my desk at work. Another great thing about Colorado was they had a three-two beer law, so that meant there were bars you could get into if you were eighteen. The Grove was an eighteen-and-over gay bar, and they would let punk bands play there. I'm sure it was like a lot of cities at that time—the gay community and the punk community… If you wanted to go dancing, you'd go to the gay bar, 'cause no one's gonna fucking try and beat you up there. And they were very welcoming—it wasn't like, "Oh, you're coming to our bar, ugh." It was like, "Come on in."

Johnny: That's why in that video from Colorado Springs, there were so many crossover people—any kind of alternative-thinking person from Colorado at that time would probably end up at the Grove if Bum Kon was playing that night, or Acid Ranch, or one of the other bands: Kennedy's Warehouse—you never knew who was going to show up besides just the punk rockers, because there was nowhere to go, y'know? That song by Peace Core was probably the anthem of Colorado—"Nowhere to Go." That's why we're doing this whole thing—there was nothing to do.

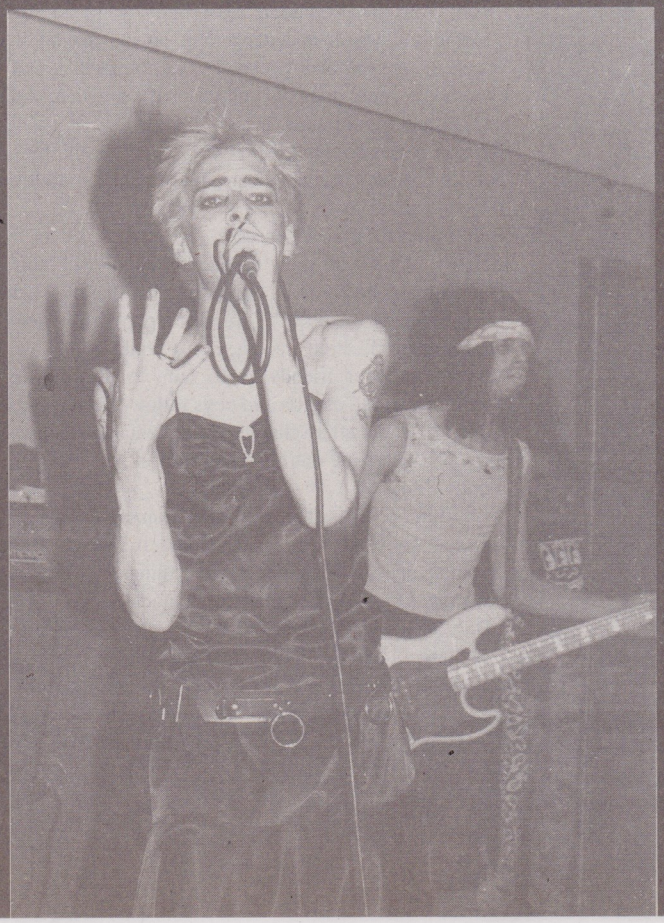
Bob: There was the lesbian crossover with A.S.F., who became Tribe 8—Anti-Scrunti Faction.

Johnny: That brings us to Bad Circus, the world's greatest band ever. And you thought Nixon sucked… *[laughs]* That was definitely the end of the end: Bad Circus at Kennedy's Warehouse.

MRR: What's the story behind the name of the band, and the title of the EP?

Bob: The name of the band… We had just done this Hüsker Dü thing and we'd decided we wanted to start a band. We'd practiced a couple times, and—as he reminded me—Larry and Mark had already played with some other guys as Reagan Youth and they had some songs, so we just needed a name. No one had thought of anything, and I was reading the newspaper on my lunch break at high school and there was a story about this dude, Woo Bum Kon—he was a police officer in South Korea. He was asleep, there was a fly on him, his wife swatted it off, and he woke up in a rage. He went to the police station, got a machine gun and some grenades, and just walked through the streets, shot everybody he saw, and then blew himself up. It was this horrible story, but the way the newspaper presented it, it made it sound really funny…

Johnny: I remember that sentence… "Several excited children ran into the street—Woo got them too." And when we were reading that out loud at lunch in high school, we just all started laughing. It was like, "Woo Bum Kon—that's not a bad name for a band." Then it got shortened to Bum Kon. And then when *Flipside* first reviewed it, they called you guys "Blim Kon"…



Bob: It was because of Erik's fake Asian-style lettering—they thought it said "Blim Kon." *[laughter]*

Johnny: Sometimes when I look at it, I think "Blim Kon." *[laughter]*

Bob: You know, you're like, "Oh, we've got this record out and we're excited," the magazine comes in and you're flipping through to see if it got reviewed, and there it is…

Johnny: "Blim Kon"! *[more laughter]*

Bob: And it was a bad review on top of that… And *Drunken Sex Sucks*, I don't remember if it happened to me or a friend—I think it happened to me—where…

Johnny: It was Oberhausen.

Bob: Oberhausen, where there was a girl on top of him, they were fucking, and she leaned over and puked, but didn't miss a rhythm. He was just like, "Drunken sex sucks." And the

whole little speech at the end of the song, I always wish I could've retracted that. *[laughter]* Every time I hear it, I cringe. And I cringed *back then* when I heard it.

Johnny: Really? I love it.

Bob: Yeah, 'cause, you know, we weren't a straight edge band or anything. I was just like, *[disappointed:]* "Oh, I'm preachifying it."

Johnny: No…

Bob: As soon as I heard the tape play back, I just wished I had not said it.

Johnny: Are you kidding? It was so appropriate. That was awesome.

Bob: *[imitating music:]* "Hey man, we're not trying to…" y'know?

Johnny: I love that!

Bob: *[in sarcastic voice:]* "If you're gonna have sex, be sober instead, it's more fun." *[imitates music]* It's like, "Aww, jeez…"

Johnny: What great advice… You were only like eighteen or nineteen years old, that's perfect.

MRR: Who came up with the idea for the cover art?

Bob: Erik drew it, and I think it was my concept.

Johnny: Oh, I thought you drew it.

Bob: No, he was going to go to graphic arts school, so he did all our covers. That was all Erik. And the skull on the back cover, I think Mark might have drawn. I drew the happy face and I drew the insert. The insert was all mine, with the Frantix beer.

Johnny: Mark came up with that skull and was like, "This should be our logo for everything!" and Erik Oberhausen was like, "Wait a minute, I don't know…" *[laughs]*

MRR: Can you talk about the guy who recorded the EP and a lot of the other early Denver stuff?

Johnny: Bob Ferbache? *[sarcastically:]* Can't stand him. What a jerk. *[laughs]*

MRR: OK, covered that.

Bob: Bob's great. He's an interesting dude.

Johnny: He's an archivist, you know? Bob always has a good time, enjoys the show, and knows when to push the record button and when to turn it off.

Bob: He knows when to push *all* the buttons. I love Bob. I don't know what to say about Bob.

Johnny: He's like Headbanger in a way. The archivist—"Let's chronicle this stuff." Duane Davis, too. We didn't even think about it then—we were just playing, doing what we were doing.

Bob: He was always like, "Hey, can I record you guys, for free?"

Johnny: So much shit wouldn't have happened if people didn't just give freely.

Bob: Yeah, Bob knew things that no one else knew, and was willing to share that information or that knowledge.

MRR: Can we talk a little about the Frantix song, "My Dad's a Fucking Alcoholic," because Johnny, your band today covers it.

Johnny: We only cover it live. *[laughs]* I changed the lyrics, though.

Bob: They just did it, and I was like, "ah, you missed the third verse, dude!" I was trying to sing along, and you just repeated the first verse…

Johnny: I love the first verse.

Bob: It's really simple lyrics and you didn't even know them all. I was really disappointed. *[laughter]*

Johnny: I actually listened to them all and wrote them all down, and was like, "No, not that third verse…" *[laughs]* It's much easier—you just *sell* that first verse, it's so great. Third verse, same as the first, Bob, whenever in doubt.

Bob: But when the Frantix would play that song, it was just kids climbing over each other to try to get to the mic.

Johnny: Who's going to be at a punk show but kids whose fathers are alcoholics, y'know? If you were that demographic in the '80s, your dad was a drunk. That was the one song, the one band that proved that Denver could be… We knew back then, even before that was a collectible record or anything. Them, and White Trash to an extent, too—you'd hear a song and go, "Wow, there's something…" You almost felt that with your band, you were just fucking around, but these guys can really lay out a song that's punk and iconic at the same time—everybody can relate to it, it rocks, it defines your sound… I talked to Erik Oberhausen many times about this—we were kind of almost jealous of the Frantix, you know? They were always above us somehow, and that song was part of the reason—that and a few others, but… "My Dad's a Fucking Alcoholic"? Seven bands could play in a warehouse all day, and that song comes on and everybody goes crazy. You'd see them play it at a party sometimes, and they would play it second or third—they would play it early in their set, and it would really keen your ear to the rest of their set. Just from covering that song, it's so easy, but the way they wrote it… They didn't change anything but the key for the chorus, really. It's one of those riffs—it's so obvious, why didn't everybody think of it before? But I've never really heard it quite the way they played it. And with Mark Fuck singing at a house party in Littleton or something, you'd just be fucking blown away by them. It was like, "wow, we don't have to wait for Black Flag to come back," you know? I'm not equating the two bands, but… There were Bum Kon shows like that, where the local band blew the touring band off the stage. That's where the Denver pride comes in. The Frantix and White Trash though, they were really the core of it. Even though White Trash was really on the scene for only six months that I can remember, or a year… Louie Largent, the singer—the way he approached the stage, it was like having a Darby Crash in front of you, or somebody like that, like, "Fuck, this guy's out of his skull. And he will kick you in the face if you get close."

Bob: They made us better, because we were like, "We're going to get that good, and we're going to be better than them," you know?

Johnny: I never thought that for a minute. *[laughs]* That's so funny.

Bob: It's friendly competition, like, "Oh, those guys are doing that? Well, we're going to do *this*, and see how they're going to respond."

Johnny: Yeah, I think Bum Kon had the chops to keep up, but no one else really did… It wasn't long after that the Frantix morphed into the Fluid.

Bob: Well, they were Madhouse first; they had that one *crazy* dude singing. He was like a Denver rock legend.

Johnny: Definitely mention him. Tommy something…

MRR: Tom Pop, wasn't it? He was in the Violators in the '70s.

Johnny: Yeah, Tom Pop, you got it. He was the first singer for the Fluid when they were called Madhouse, you're right. And then John Robinson was the singer while they were called Madhouse. I don't know where they found Robinson…

Bob: I knew Robinson back in the day. Robinson was a Boulder dude. When I would go up to a party up there, probably even before Bum Kon started, John would have the parties at his house. He was a New Romantic; he'd wear all white and some weird make-up. He was cool.

Johnny: When the Fluid started playing, it was like, "all bets are off."

Bob: Yeah, time to move to SF. This party's over.

Johnny: Those guys were all about "let's have a fuckin' rock scene." I remember being in Brother Rat and playing those early shows—it was really fun.

Bob: Well, the first Sub Pop grunge record, half the songs on it were lyrically written by Johnny.

Johnny: That's not really true, but…

Bob: Well…

Johnny: The first grunge record is *Superfuzz Bigmuff*.

Bob: No, it's Blood Circus.

Johnny: *[laughing]* That only sounds like a grunge record 'cause it's on Sub Pop and he had a terrible amp. Mike Dogmeat… But Dogmeat was there from the beginning—the first punk rock show I ever saw, at the Free School in 1981, he was in the band Dogmeat.

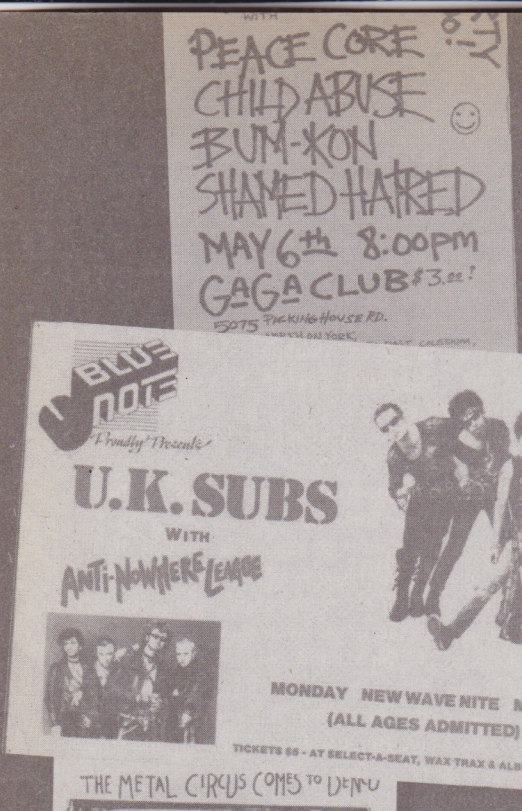
Bob: He was in a band, Brother Rat, with Johnny, and then he went to Seattle and started Blood Circus, and some of the songs were Brother Rat songs. So, thus, you invented grunge, sir. *[laughter]*

Johnny: I totally agree. *[laughs]* No, grunge definitely started with Mudhoney. And the Melvins. I would say Mike Anderson influenced the sound for sure—Blood Circus, his Sub Pop band, definitely was at the origin of grunge, but that's not the whole story by any means.

Bob: No, but as far as I know, it's the first Sub Pop record to be, like, hard rock. And see how that worked out for them. *[laughter]*

MRR: Did the Fluid move to Seattle or were they always a Denver band?

Bob: No, they broke up, and Garret, the drummer, moved. I don't know if anyone else moved



caused the implosion, not getting along…

Johnny: The same old story…

MRR: So, did Bum Kon ever try and tour? What was the farthest out you guys played?

Bob: Vegas was the farthest we ever made it. There was this guy, Shannon, he moved to Denver from Los Vegas, and he talked a lot about "the great Vegas scene," and how we should go play a show, and how he could set it up, and it would be amazing, it would be fun—so, we did. He set it up in August, and…

Johnny: *[laughing]* Don't worry, it's not warm there…

Bob: We went all the way to Los Vegas, got there, and it was nothing that we were promised at all. The Vegas scene then was really weird… They didn't have Wax Trax—they had the Hair Zoo. It was a hair salon for alternative styles. All the punks hung out there, and they all wore leather and had GBH hair—in Vegas in August! We were just in cut-off shorts and bandanas, like, "What the fuck?" *[laughter]*

Johnny: After seeing Black Flag, we were like, "we can wear whatever we want." If you played like fuckin' Greg Ginn and Chuck Dukowski and Robo, you can fuckin' wear sweats…

Bob: So we finally went to his show in North Las Vegas to play, and we had been guaranteed a certain amount of money—you know, basically to cover gas there and back—and we got there, and there were some local bands that were gonna play… And then Agression happened to be coming through on their way somewhere else. So then they got our money and our slot…

Johnny: *[laughing]* Agression…

Bob: …And I've hated that guy since. And then he got a job at your brother's bar, remember? He fucked me over there, too! *[laughter]* That fuckin' band's been following me around forever, fucking my shit up. And they don't even know who I am. *[more laughter]* But Denver, it's so isolated—a thousand miles to Kansas City, which has nothing, a thousand miles to Salt Lake, a thousand miles to Omaha—but within that, the Massacre Guys from Salt Lake would come and play Denver…

Johnny: Those guys were great…

Bob: And they went on to be in the Descendents and All. And my cousin John—we got into punk rock at the same time—he was from Lawrence, Kansas, and in the Mortal Micronotz. They would come out, or we would then drive to Lawrence and play with them. And William S. Burroughs wrote lyrics for them. In Denver, we had Ginsberg going "wah wah wah" between bands, and they had William S. Burroughs writing lyrics for them. It was like—"Not fair, dude!" *[laughter]* But it was stupid of us not to tour, really, because we should have gone to Salt Lake to play with the Massacre Guys, 'cause they were our buds, and when they'd come, we'd play with them. But we never had the…

Johnny: …the wherewithal—everybody was so poor…

Bob: …even the balls, though, to just leave and try it. You know, everybody had to work. When the band started, everybody except for Mark had already moved out—Mark still lived at home and everybody else was living in shit apartments, working shit jobs. And even Wax Trax, which was a *great* job, was still record store pay…

Johnny: But Wax Trax was good, man.

Bob: Yeah, it didn't matter. The one thing that Duane Davis failed to grasp was that people would have paid *him* to be able to work there.

Johnny: It's funny, whenever you read any kind of history of rock scenes, in *Ugly Things* or whatever—when it gets to the core, there's always a record store and a hang-out…

Bob: But, I don't think it ever even crossed our minds to go on a tour. It just couldn't have happened. No one knew who we were—why would anyone book us? If my cousin could set something up in Lawrence, we would drive out there, and that was the extent of where we *could* go, you know? It just didn't seem possible…

Johnny: And the scene was so insular, everything was so set up at that time, all your friends were there—everything was there in Denver to have a really good time. You didn't need to show it to the rest of the world. I don't think we thought about it that way. There were people like Headbanger and Duane Davis and Nancy Kennedy who were like, "Document this shit, get it going on," but for us, it was just fun.

Bob: If you could play once every month, every other month, that was good enough.

or not.

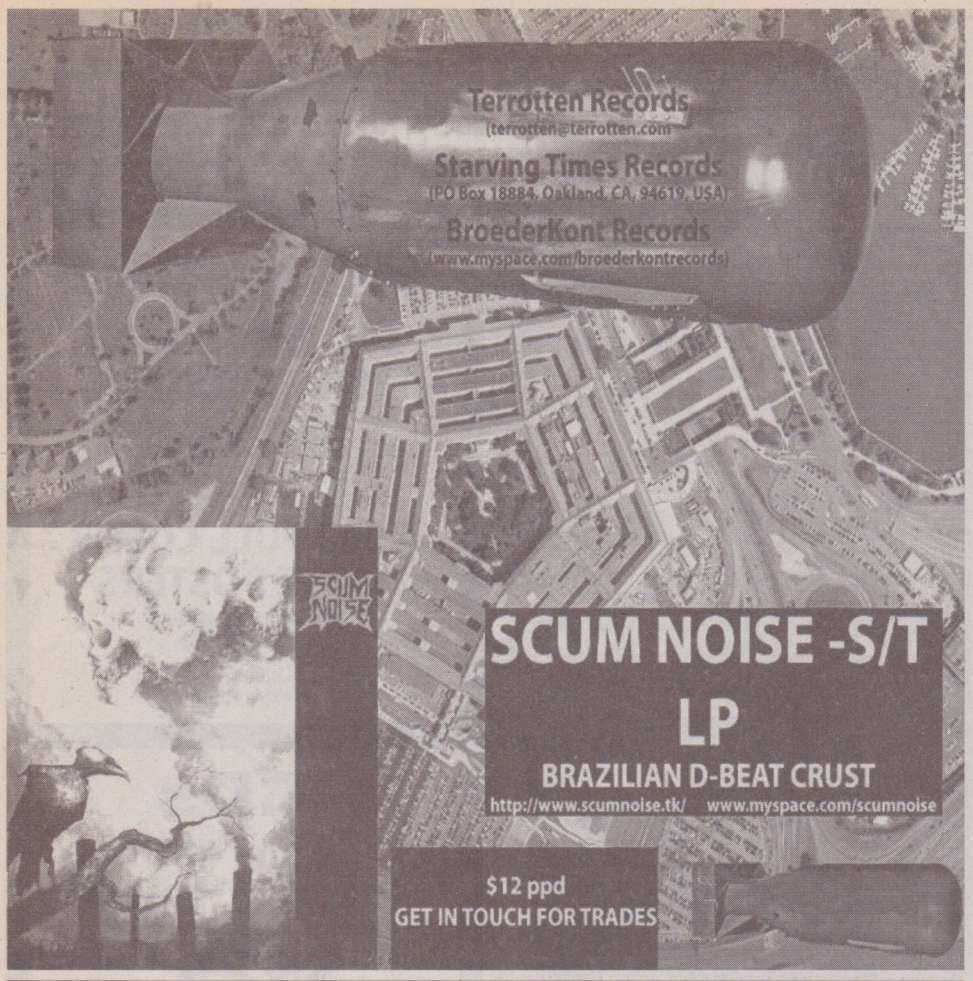
Johnny: They were a Sub Pop band from Denver. And it was hard to tour from Denver, you know? Sub Pop bands could just do the coast…

In Denver, you had to get your band together and get all the way out there. It was hard.

Bob: They were the only band in Denver to get signed to a real label, that I can recall.

Johnny: After Sub Pop, they went to Hollywood Records, which is a subsidiary of Disney.

Bob: That eventually, of course,



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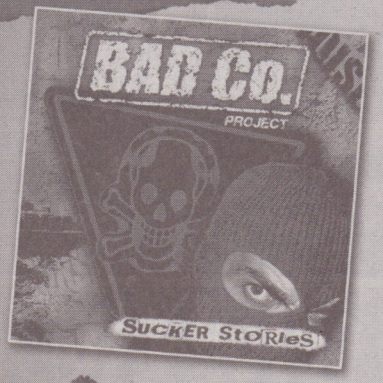

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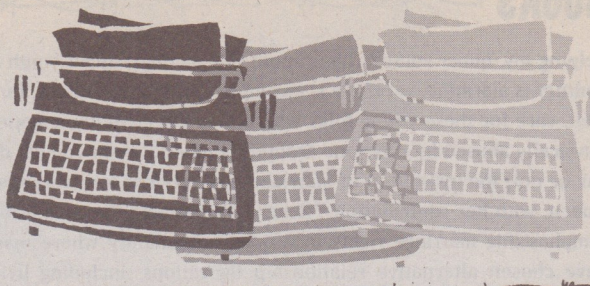
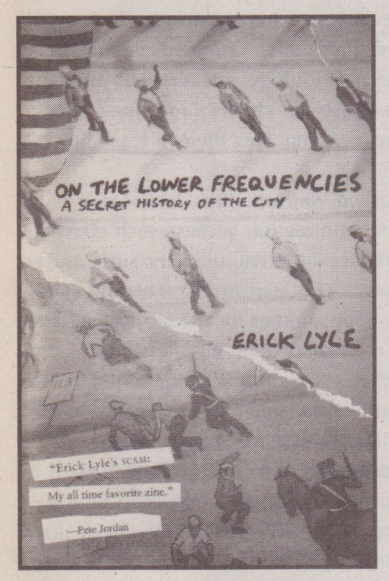




On The Lower Frequencies: A Secret History of the City
Erick Lyle
Soft Skull
www.softskull.com
269 pages • $14.95

At a time when me and many of my friends are feeling beat down and discouraged (how many years has this particular bullshit war been going on now?), *On the Lower Frequency* is a needed reminder that there are other folks doing cool stuff and making a difference. Sometimes it's easy to forget that there are other activists (and "gasp" not all of them are punx, weird right?) and just think it's you and your buddies attending protests, or going to DIY shows, or whatever. But it's not true, so chill out. There's a kajillion of us around still working for social justice.

Erick Lyle's *On the Lower Frequency* is a surprisingly touching and well written book. (I mean, I guess not that surprising, since I've always been an admirer of his writing, but still, when the punx turn out art or writing that is totally inspiring and nostalgic at the same time, I'm always pleasantly surprised.) Whether writing about opening up a squat where free food is available and free shows are put on, confronting a crooked mayor about his anti-poor people policies, or organizing a Punks Against War parade, Lyle's writing is super inspiring. You might actually find yourself getting off the couch and doing something when you're done reading. Highly recommended.

—Thera Webb

Sing For Your Supper
David Rovics
59pgs
Pm Press Pamphlet

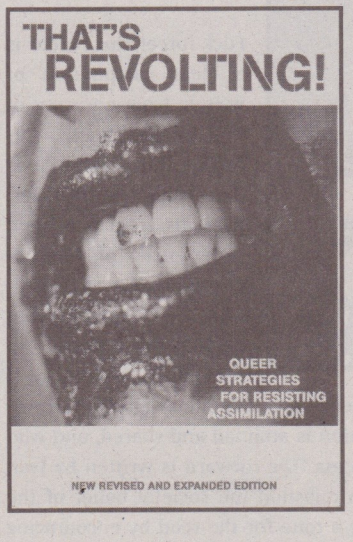
This fifty-nine-page book is a great read, it's a DIY guide to playing music, writing songs and booking your own shows. David Rovics is a very intelligent individual and goes into great depth about things ranging from the RIAA and their wrong doings to the very small independent musician who is just looking to play some good music and get "out there" without all the major label red tape. *If* you are a musician or just a fan of music I would recommend picking this one up, it will open your eyes to things you didn't know about the "Industry!"

—Caleb Lash

Move Into The Light
The Yurbulence Collective
Pm Press Pamphlet

Whether it's the G8 Summit at Heiligan dam or experiments in Latin America, the politics of climate change or uprisings in French banlieues, questions of visibility and illumination crop up again and again. But our experiences create their own luminosity, and their own areas of darkness. How can we overcome our night blindness once we have moved beyond the known? This pamphlet was so-so. It let you know about climate changes and the effects it had, but it did not tell you any ways to help prevent climate change. On a scale of one-to-ten, I would give this a six.

—Caleb Lash



That's Revolting: Queer Strategies for Resisting Assimilation
Mattilda Bernstein Sycamore, editor
350 pages • $19.95
Soft Skull Press
www.softskull.com

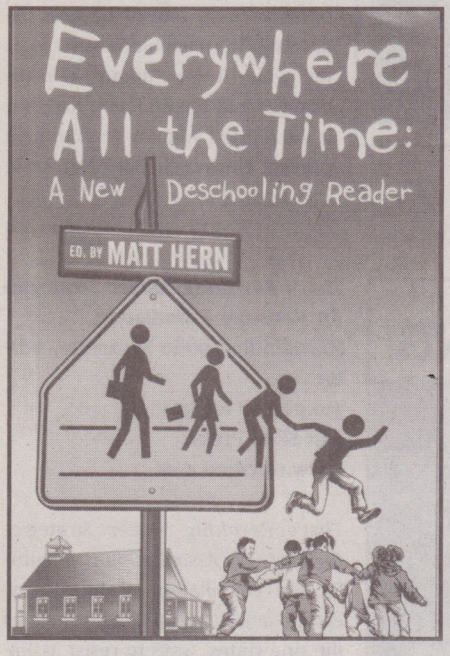
That's Revolting: Queer Strategies for Resisting Assimilation is a multi-faceted compilation of interviews, essays and accounts regarding, as the title states, ways to resist assimilation in the GLBT community. The topics range from family planning, sexual debauchery, marriage, gender identity, resources and funding for queer youth, racism, sexism, homophobia, tranny rights and survival stories, political activism, feminism and art, just to name a scant few.

In a time where most may think the main struggle for the gay community is the fight for legal gay marriage, Kaila Kuban and Chris Grinnell, with their essay, "More Abercrombie than Activist: Queer Working Class Rural Youth vs. The New Gay Teenager" ask how the struggle for gay marriage is

helping say, queer youth? The dropout rate amongst queer youth across the country is alarming, yet there is a complete lack of resources, funding, and well, care for these young folks where they get mentally, emotionally and physically abused by everyone around them. And when you get down to it, gay or not, the institution of marriage is simply not for everyone. As Carol Queen, with her contribution, "Never a Bridesmaid, Never a Bride" puts it, "Emphasizing marriage rights in a queer community where many people have chosen alternative relationship figurations, including living single, cuts off or de-emphasizes all the other ways we can choose to relate to one another." The Fed Up Queers (FUQ) point out that "normalization and acceptance" does not equate to freedom.

There's a little something for everyone in *That's Revolting: Queer Strategies for Resisting Assimilation*. There are many problems facing the world, facing women, facing children, and many facing the GLBT community and exactly what these critical issues are, cannot be lumped into one essay, one article, let alone even one book. But Mattilda Benstein Sycamore set out to do just that, compiling an undoubtedly open and diverse dialogue with everyone from queer youth to prison activists to female to male transsexuals, along with personal accounts of Sycamore's own history and activism. One of the main themes right off the bat is that there is no right or wrong answer, but that it is of great importance to have such a diverse and open dialogue in our daily lives. Everyone needs to try and collectively communicate to better understand and overcome the obstacles that may come our way ever day. The stories, interviews and narratives range from enlightening, heartwarming, frustrating, eye opening and utterly heartbreaking. Highly, "highly" recommended.

—Mizz Jenn



Everywhere All the Time: A New Deschooling Reader
Ed. By Matt Hern
AK Press
269 pages • $17.95
www.akpress.org
674-A 23rd Street
Oakland, CA 94612

Fuck force! This reader is a clear compilation of writing from an array of individuals, ages, cultures, and time-periods that relay the theories, methods, practices, and experiences of alternative approaches to education; a movement that exists in response to compulsory education. It is a great read for all whose minds seek expanding ideas about learning, the processes through which information is attained and shared, and who has the ultimate decision in that process. The forward is written by Ivan Illich in which he asks the reader to question the societal belief of the "need" for education. Illich sets quite a tone for the read by encouraging the reader to tune their mind to a different channel, one in which learning is no longer seen as a need, and as such a commodity to be bought and sold, but an inherent process inseparable and completely sustainable through the free living of life. This is not merely a compilation of essays written by those with all opinion and no action, the writers are all participants in the movement in some form or another with different philosophies and approaches to learning. There is a wealth of experiential information to draw from as many of these experiences grew from the seeds of actual need, and within a community of people who found real solutions in response to those needs based upon the principals of freedom and autonomy. As a result the contents of this book shed light on anarchist principles in action where the people involved (in many instances in this book those people are children) have a voice, and their voice counts, and so do all the other voices in the community. And when those voices all come together in cooperation there is a hum of naturalness. In the learning environments described in this reader that hum is enticing. It calls to those who recognize the freedom in the ability to evolve without the strings of education pulling you along, freedom from the chains of so-called education! For as Berkman put it, the means shape the end result. As a reader with anarchistic ideals I found myself asking if we wish our children to value freedom, autonomy, and cooperation, why are we compelling them to learn through coercion, authority, and obedience?

If this is a question you have asked yourself, then this reader is an advantageous place to start gathering information because such questioning is highly represented in the reader by great thinkers such as Leo Tolstoy. In the introductory essay, "On Education," Tolstoy states: "Education is the action of one man upon another for the purpose of making the person under education acquire certain moral habits..." This process deemed by Tolstoy as the scholastic condition of the soul, replaces the "imagination, creativeness, inventiveness" inherent in all children with memorization, recitation, and the like. In essence, Tolstoy expresses his view that in the scholastic environment inherent curiosity, which leads to wisdom, is squelched for book knowledge through compulsion and fear. Here Tolstoy enables his audience to view the process of institutionalized education differently than it is commonly viewed by clearly relaying that learning is the free exchange of cultural knowledge, whereas education is the act of one man's learning upon another without solicitation. This Tolstoy article was a great introductory article as Hern, the editor and compiler, frees the reader from common thought on education allowing for the recognition that learning does not need to arrive in a socially accepted package, and when it does, education merely creates cookie-cutter humans and spoils the free and explorative impulses of the child whose fostered creativity is the color of cultural life. Tolstoy's views lay the foundation for the reactionary deschooling movement.

In fact, Hern includes many founding thinkers in this compilation of articles including articles written by Ivan Illich, John Holt, Emma Goldman, and Vinoba Bhave, whom Gandhi named his spiritual successor. Bhave, in the article "The Intimate and the Ultimate" immediately addresses the ultimate goal of education, which he claims is to stimulate individuals to become independent thinkers. "A student is so taught that he is capable of going forward and acquiring knowledge for himself." He further states: "But it is a mistake to think that this life-knowledge can only be had in school. Life knowledge can only be had from life." He explains that to teach and to learn are not separate processes, an "uneducated person is nowhere to be found," suggesting that wherever there is an exchange of any kind between two people there is learning in progress.

Such bold and foundational philosophies expressing the whys of deschooling are securely represented in the first section of the book. In the second section of this four section reader many more recent articles are published on the topic of deschooling including some excerpts from "unschooled kids." Excerpts like the one written by Gen Robertson who attended a non-traditional school until the last few years of schooling. When asked to compare non-traditional and traditional schooling Gen Robertson was able to respond in reference to traditional schooling "I think that my true love for learning was getting hidden away somewhere and replaced by these meaningless, short-lived feelings of accomplishment after writing a test or an essay. The relief that comes when you realize you

can forget everything you just learned." A haunting and very relatable statement to anyone who's suffered the pangs of education.

Section three presents somewhat of a how-to. Each article is a description of alternatives and programs around the world. Hern begins this section by stating "In large part, when I talk about deschooling, I am not talking about doing away with schools per se, but extinguishing monopoly state schooling and compulsory education." He further exclaims "we need to be talking about counter-institutions." There is a large representation of such institutions outlined in this section of the book. Each encompassing a unique philosophy and structure based on the specific needs of those involved with its workings. The uniqueness of each institution is imperative for it is the result of the natural tendencies of those involved. Hern describes this process well when he states "The reality is that all kids are uniquely enigmatic creatures with constantly changing learning patterns, needs, interests, passions, family circumstances, capacities, and quirks...And that's why it is impossible to describe The Good School, as if it were a magic formula that could be applied and reapplied anywhere...how these places are constructed is a matter for local conversation and debate."

Section four outlines even more alternatives to education, models from squats in urban settings to foster-care environments on the Thai-Burmese border. With all of these examples of alternatives it is a wonder that we continue to allow ourselves to be entrenched in the game of force-fed information. Who, after all, has the ultimate decision in your learning? If you are a believer in the free exchange of information, if you agree that it is this free exchange which creates space for thinking and growing, if you agree with the thinkers I've described that the natural format for learning is within an un-coerced environment, that such a format should be the basis of all knowledge acquisition, this reader will open your eyes to a few things. Bhave puts it beautifully "In matters of knowledge, no orders can be given." For true education does not confine but creates space for the natural evolutionary process to unfold. Fuck Force!

—Erin Love

Lickin' the Beaters: Low Fat Vegan Desserts
Sue Moffat
96 pages • $10.95
PM Press
P.O. Box 23912
Oakland, CA 94623

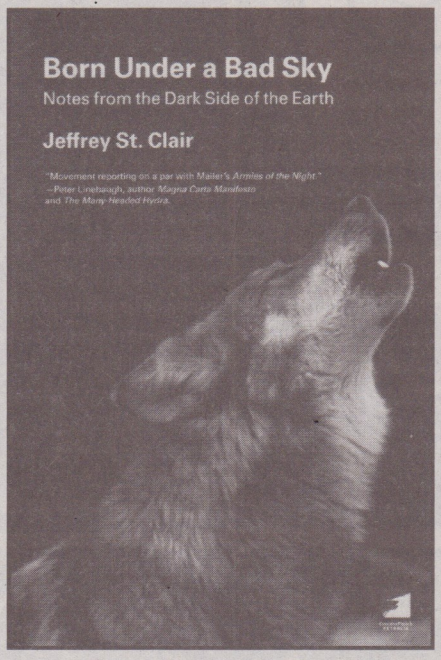
I really enjoy reading cookbooks. Even though I am not vegan, or vegetarian for that matter, this cookbook was no exception. The recipes are well organized and easy to understand and follow. Regardless of the obvious D.I.Y. nature of the publisher, this book is set up in a very professional manner. This is not to say that every PM Press book isn't professional, but I have come across many "punk cookbooks" that have been far more complicated than they needed to be.

Throughout, the recipes are some really cool art pieces drawn by eight different artists. I really appreciate the fun it brings to the standardized formatting of the recipes. The book covers desserts ranging from cakes and donuts, candies, cookies and bars, pies, ice creams, puddings and toppings, quick breads and "fruity stuff."

I received my formal training at a French culinary institute and spent the better part of the last fifteen years cooking in various levels of dining establishments. It's something I am just as passionate about as I am punk. I feel that cooking is an art that can be, if not more valuable than music and Suie Moffat has compiled a killer group of recipes that shares in the same merging of mediums.

Check out Suie's website, www.dairyfreedesserts.com and get a preview of the art and recipes. Totally recommended for dessert lovers regardless if you're a vegan or not. Everything is easy enough to follow that much experience is not needed, but at the same time the collection of recipes is varied enough to keep as an ultimate dessert reference for those of us that are really comfortable around the kitchen.

—Scott Miller



Born Under a Bad Sky: Notes from the Dark Side of the Earth
Jeffrey St. Clair
417 pages • $19.95
A.K. Press
www.akpress.org

Mr. St. Clair and Counter Punch bring this collection of reports from the front line of corporate and governmental corruption as they work together to exploit the environment. This collection of short essays, or maybe better described as transmissions, reads like pieces written for the Internet. Most can be read in less than 15 minutes and are jam packed with the deceit and corruption of the status-quo and their gross abuse of the our mutual commons. From "green" politicians like Al Gore, to those less green like Senator Ted Stevens of Alaska, every politician is connected to a corporate polluter, mining company or logging concern via graft and collusion. It is only appropriate to be reading this book while Senator Stevens gets indicted for not reporting gifts from corporate donors and friends. Besides dethroning supposed "Greens" and demonizing the obvious and non-obvious targets of environmental abuse and exploitation St. Clair also focuses on lionizing the true progressives of the environmental left where progressive social politics and environmental justice mesh.

The part of the book that I enjoyed the most, and perhaps the soul of the collection can be found in the last two pieces in the book. Both are longer than most of the other pieces, chronicling river rafting trips in the Colorado River basin. One is down the Green and Colorado Rivers through Cataract Canyon into Glen Canyon and the other on the Green through Dinosaur National Park. Mirroring similar trips chronicled by Edward Abbey in Desert Solitaire, St. Clair weaves in the current history of the national park and the west, from water rights wrangling to cattle ranching to the experiences of other travelers through the west and the river, such as Col. Powell.

Personally, I'd recommend books such as *Cadillac Desert* or *Desert Solitaire* for folks wanting to read a first book about our nation's desecration of the west, but this collection does serve the purpose of getting me all charged up.

—Ben Howell

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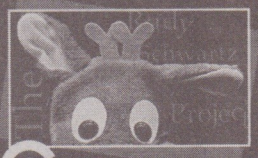

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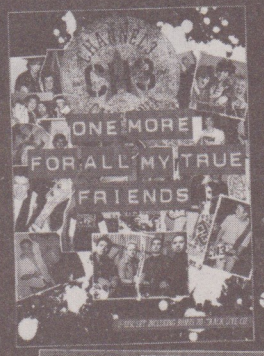

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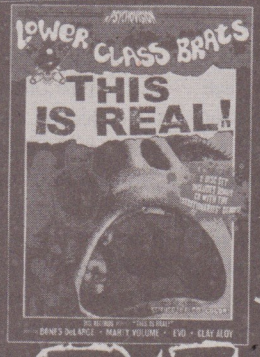

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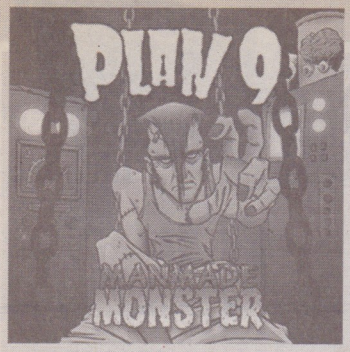

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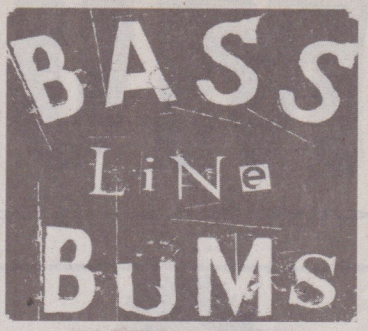

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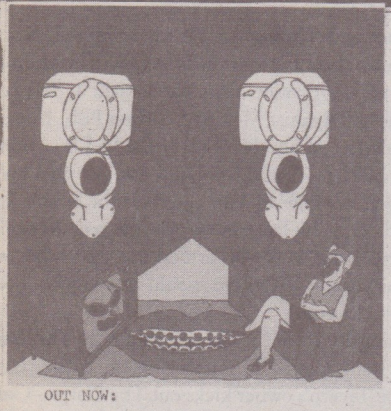

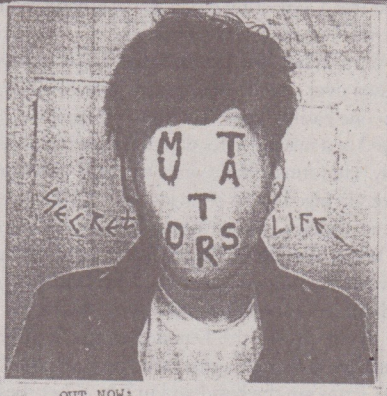

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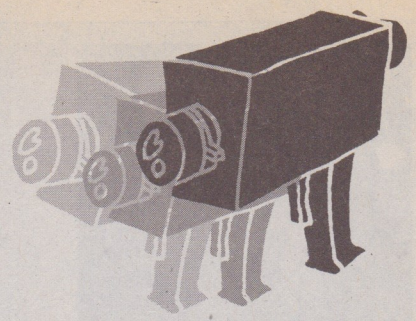
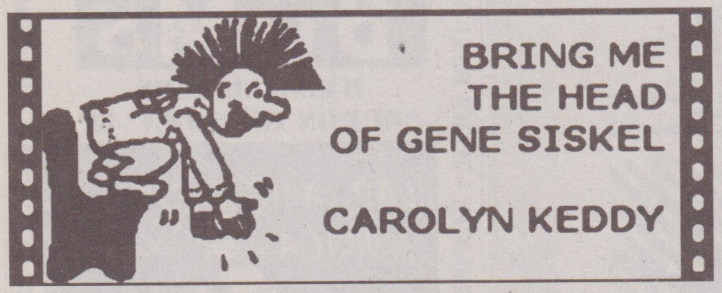




BRING ME THE HEAD OF GENE SISKEL

CAROLYN KEDDY

I WANT PERSONAL DAMAGE

I finally saw the Germs movie **What We Do Is Secret** and it may surprise you to hear me say is that it wasn't too bad. In fact, it was pretty good. That may shock anyone who I told how lousy the reformed Germs were when I saw them over a year ago. It wasn't that the band was bad per se. I think the problem was that they were too good. Everyone had learned to play his/her instruments really well. Don Bolles plays double bass drums. Actor Shane West, who acts as Darby Crash in the film, plays him on stage as well. Yet, he annunciates and always sings into the mic. The whole performance was just that, a performance. It seemed too much like going through the motions. But then again what was I expecting going to see a band reformed twenty-five years after the fact without their lead singer?

With **What We Do Is Secret** I was mostly expecting to get a Hollywood glossed over version of a tragedy that hits the main points, but turns the story into one easily digested by the average viewer. It is a bit of that. Darby is portrayed as a misunderstood genius that is granted straight As if he leaves school early. He forms a band with the idea of a five-year plan. Yet, the full plan is never divulged to his band mates. They get swept up in the fun of notoriety and the annoyance of their friends' drug use that they don't see where it is all going.

What We Do Is Secret manages to express the essential feeling of punk without beating you over the head with its importance. There's the silliness and obnoxiousness that come with the hubris of youthful naiveté. The Germs are in line to see the Damned at the Whiskey. While Claude Bessy of *Slash* Magazine is trying to interview the Damned, Crash is behind them yelling that the Germs are the best band in LA. When Bessy finally takes the bait and asks who the Germs are, it ends up with a challenge for the band to perform across the street at an open mic night. The Germs have never performed live before, they can barely play, are nervous, and though the most of audience, including Dave Vanian and Captain Sensible of the Damned, think they're terrible, the band is exhilarated by the experience. It encourages them to keep going. I may be older and possibly wiser, but because of punk I always maintain the attitude that a person can do whatever she/he wants.

Not that **What We Do Is Secret** is purely a serious film. Many of the periphery people in the film seem to be portrayed as caricatures. Noah Segan, who play Germ's drummer Don Bolles, wears an ill-fitting wig. Subtitles are put under Ray Park's lines as Masque operator Scotsman Brendan McMullen when it is mentioned that no one could understand his accent. JP Manoux's portrayal of KROQ DJ Rodney Bingenheimer is not unexpectedly over the top. Most of it is a bit silly, but entertaining. Though comparatively Shane West as Darby Crash is a bit too normal. He whines occasionally about someone getting him a beer, but mostly he sings into the mic and clearly annunciates all the lyrics.

When I watch a biopic of a deceased person I always wonder whose point of view the story is being told from. **What We Do Is Secret** really isn't Darby Crash's story since he isn't around to reflect on and express everything that was going through his mind at every point of his life. The recreated interview with Claude Bessy provides some insight into the mind of Crash who discusses his admiration for fascists, but jokingly notes that he should be the leader of the fascist USA. So one can't help wonder if he is just fucking with his interviewer, similar to the band's infamous interview with Rodney on KROQ. He could have been serious about it all, but he could have also been messing around with an interviewer who is taking things too seriously.

The only two other characters besides Crash who are depicted as straightforward are Pat Smear and Lorna Doom. It is possible that **What We Do Is Secret** is their version of the events. That would make sense. (www.whatwedoissecret.com)

924 Gilman: Talk About Tact and Timing is a documentary that attempts to recount the twenty-one plus years of the Berkeley, CA punk club. It is no doubt a daunting task to gather such a history into a concise and representative film. The film focuses on the positive aspects of the club. That the club is volunteer run, all-ages, doesn't serve alcohol, doesn't book major label bands is and should be seen as the best possible scenario. Plus that the club has lasted this long and is still going should be an inspiration to all punks. Yet, the film doesn't manage to catch that spark. The current volunteers seem a bit worn out by the situation. There is little talk of the challenges of keeping the club going or of the pride in what has been accomplished. Except for some slight bashing of *MRR* founder and one of the Gilman organizers Tim Yohannon in the beginning of the film, there is no talk of anything controversial that ever happened at the club.

924 Gilman: Talk About Tact and Timing is a bit too scattered. If you don't know anything about the club or how it is run you won't learn much from this film. There are too many long performances from bands such as Ted Leo and The Pharmacists, Pansy Division, Against Me!, and Citizen Fish. In fact, the inclusion of full song performances of any band gives the feel that there isn't much to be told of the story of 924 Gilman. I would think just the opposite, especially having read the book *924 Gilman*. I am surprised the book's editor Brian Edge wasn't interviewed. The film lacks more personal recollections. There is a lot of talk about all the young kids who attend the shows, but no interviews with any of them. There seems like there should be so much more to the story. (www.alternativetentacles.com)

Wondering what was happening in Toronto, Canada in 1978? **The Last Pogo** documents the last night of punk rock at Toronto's Horseshoe Tavern on December 1, 1978. The Horseshoe Tavern's owner kicks out The Garys—Gary Topp and Gary Cormier—who had been booking the club. They put on one last show, which features all Toronto bands: the Scenics, the Cardboard Brains, the Secrets, the Mods, the Ugly, the Viletones, and Teenage Head. The night ends up being broken up by the cops before Teenage Head could play. They end up playing one song, but it is unacceptable to the crowd who trashes the place.

The Last Pogo is only 26 minutes long, but manages to capture the fun and frustration of the night. Each band performs one song. The bands are shot really well and the sound is excellent until Teenage Head perform. There must have been a mishap during all the dealings with cops because the sound for their song is non-existent. It seems as if another lower quality performance was dubbed over the footage. The film and sound don't synch up and the crowd noise is turned up to cover it up. Unfortunately, it is a slight disappointment to an otherwise great film.

The live performances are interspersed with short interviews about the night. The Garys are understandably annoyed at losing their space and lash out at the Ramones who they booked before anyone else would. Forgotten Rebels singer Mickey DeSadist jokes that the organizers couldn't handle real punk since they didn't have his band perform. The cameramen don't manage to capture the cops or the riot that ensued, but the soundman was still recording so you get to hear a bit of what was happening. Then the cameraman gets back in

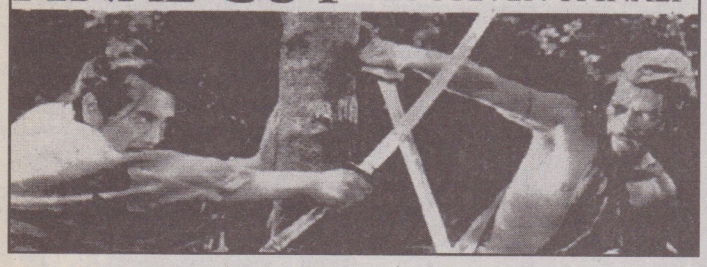
to photograph the pile of broken chairs.

It would have been cool if **The Last Pogo** contained some more songs from each of the bands as a DVD extra. Director Colin Brunton is working on another film called **The Last Pogo Jumps Again**, a history of Toronto/ Hamilton/ London punk so maybe he is saving all the extras for that. (www.thelastpogo.net)

Although it has nothing to do with film, I would like to just say a farewell to my friend Matthew Odietus. Matthew died on June 28. He was only 40. To say I will miss him is an understatement. The news of his death has crushed me. He is one of my all-time favorite guitarists. I would just watch him with amazement. One night after a Candy Snatchers show at the CW Saloon in San Francisco, I jokingly said, "I wish I could play guitar like you." He, in all seriousness, replied, "Why can't you?" I laughed out loud and said, "OK. I will". Believe me I tried, but how could I? He was just too damn good. Goodbye Matthew.

I am always looking for films to review. If you made one, send a copy to Carolyn Keddy, PO Box 460402, San Francisco, CA 94146-0402. If your film is playing in the San Francisco Bay Area, let me know at carolyn@maximumrocknroll.com. I will go see it. www.carolynkeddy.com

FINAL CUT BY STEVEN SPINALI



I can assure you: the last thing a serious filmmaker wants is to have his movie identified as a "theme" drama. Depending on the subject matter, it reduces his film to a few words. If the prospective viewer finds the subject matter disagreeable, he can ignore the film without so much as a second thought. This type of film usually has an agenda of some sort—however well-crafted, the moviegoer can come away as if he's endured some sort of lecture.

With **The Visitor**, director Tom McCarthy has tried his level best to avoid the usual pitfalls of this kind of drama, and based on its critical reception, most seem to feel that it works.

Walter Vale (Richard Jenkins) is a professor of anthropology at an unnamed East Coast university. He's remarkably uninterested in his job, students, and subject. He'll present a student's paper at a convention, yet claiming primary authorship. His lectures are exactly the same every semester, and have been for two decades. When a graduate student asks for a hard-luck extension, Vale takes a look at the paper, sighs, and returns it. It's not that deadlines are all that important to him—it's simply his no-fault manner of avoiding the nuisance of grading. These days, Vale is teaching only two courses a semester on the pretext that he's writing a book. So far, he's written nothing.

Even his department head recognizes the telltale signs of tenured ennui. Hale does what he can to avoid the nuisance of a regional conference, but he's cornered into the obligation. It's hard not to note the irony that Vale is an anthropologist whose interest in people has withered.

The first turning point occurs when he returns to his second apartment, in New York. When he walks into the bathroom, he finds a young black woman in the bathtub, screaming her lungs out. A man rushes in, threatening to kill Vale if he's so much as touched his girlfriend. There's an uncertain moment when no one's quite certain about their rights, but quickly becomes clear: Tarek (Haaz Sleiman) and girlfriend Zainab are squatting in Vale's pad. Over dinner (Vale's treat), we learn that the couple is unregistered aliens from Syria and Senegal. Vale kindly offers to let them stay until they've found a place, but things get complicated.

The Visitor, from here on, becomes something of a term paper on the value of multiculturalism. I'm not sure I needed much convincing, and that goes to my basic issue with theme movies. Director McCarthy finesses over the issue of whether the couple had any right to be in the country in the first place; you'd have to be an insensitive boor not to be charmed by the pair, or ummoved by their plight. In particular, Tarek turns out to be an amusing, sensitive man who even offers to teach Vale the basics of the African drum, his passion.

For Vale, a small part of the world falls into place. He'd passed drum performers on the New York streets and never gave them much thought; now, after a few lessons on the African rhythmic system, Tarek invites him to help out on in an impromptu street concert. Despite a few nervous moments, he soon comes to hold playing Tarek's spare drums. You can predict the moment within seconds when Tarek is fingered by a pair of hard-nosed subway agents, which propels all three of them into the bureaucratic world of US Immigration.

If, like me, you're jaded, you might think, "Ah. A message movie." It's hard to deny the fact that the arc of the drama flows along the general lines of a humanistic cautionary tale, warning on the faults of intolerance. The film doesn't have to commit too much emotional blackmail on its audience to get its point across, and you can't help but feel reassured that a progressive-minded filmmaker has taken on an issue that's not easy to formulate.

I suspect that **The Visitor** wasn't made to provide an airtight case for the easing of immigration regulations. In its best moments, the film suggests that our culture can be impoverished in small ways by our unwillingness to pull down cultural barriers and that the rewards are worth the risk. That means paying more attention to your conscience than arbitrary laws.

I didn't quite find the professor character credible, but that's more than evened out by the appearance of Tarek's mother, Mouna (Hiam Abbass), whose assured dignity leads to a suggestion of autumn love for them both; but sometimes it's just the right person at the wrong time. In spite of its small flaws, I suspect that most viewers will find **The Visitor** touching, and maybe even instructive.

The Edge of Heaven gropes with the same issue of multiculturalism, but aims for a narrative complexity that only gradually reveals the plot's secrets. Director Fatih Akin approaches storytelling in the same way as, say, **Pulp Fiction** or **Amores Perros**; when one element of the plot ends, another character brings the clock back to the beginning to see events from the eyes of another person. The threads of action uncover mysteries that can only be learned through accidental interactions Some might find this kind of plot contrived, but it's utterly unpredictable, and gripping to the end.

Under typical conditions, these characters might have little interest in one another, and the director accentuates this by advancing the plot through a series of short stories.

Ali (Tuncel Kurtiz) opens the action paying for the services of a local whore, Yeter (Nursel Köse). Retired, Ali makes a proposition: he's willing to let her live at his home, but only if their sexual relationship is exclusive. Yeter agrees to be Ali's live-in whore, and enough years have passed to make the arrangement agreeable, at least in the beginning. Ali hadn't accounted for the fact that even prostitutes are human beings, and her accidental murder changes the world for everyone from that point on.

Nejat (Baki Davrak), Ali's only son, vows to track down Yeter's relatives; it puts his life on hold, but it's the only way he can be show responsibility in a way that his father now cannot. As the plot shifts to Istanbul, more characters take on the mantle of the plot, and changed lives offer at least the possibility of redemption.

Without giving away the major surprises, the audience is ushered through a series of events, which at least in human terms, are sometimes less than believable. A character might give up a prestigious career on a whim, or inexplicably step into the world of selfless service or terrorism. At the same time, the characters are common, everyday folk at heart, and this helps makes the story somehow believable.

We discover the reason these unrelated things have been drawn together, and the cumulative events balance each other with their clever irony. The connections may seem contrived at times, but you still get the feeling that you're watching an unfolding of real events.

The Edge of Heaven is more subtle and believable than **The Visitor**, even if both films are saying roughly the same thing. But **The Edge of Heaven** approaches its message less from politics than humanism.

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OFFSIDES
IT'S A STRUGGLE TO COMMUNICATE EP

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2ND CLASS CITIZENS – "No One Is Safe" CD

Journeyman hardcore punk from this Bay Area group. *No One Is Safe* is the 2ND CLASS CITIZENS' second album, released and promoted by the band. Musically, it's kind of similar to fellow locals SCURVY DOGS or STRUNG UP, but maybe with some mid-period POISON IDEA (circa *War All the Time* or *Feel the Darkness*) drive and metallic flourishes thrown in the mix. The lyrics cover both broad political issues ("No One Is Safe," "UPC") and more personal topics ("It's Not My Fault," "Dramaddict"). Following the ten studio tracks are seven more recorded live at Burnt Ramen, including BLACK FLAG and PART TIME CHRISTIANS covers, and completing the whole package is some corny (yet strangely compelling) Egyptian-pharaohs-as-aliens artwork. (CS)
(self-released, www.myspace.com/2ndclasscitizens)

7 SECONDS – "Hardcore Rules 1980-1982" LP

Pretty generic bootleg of early 7 SECONDS demos, but contains lots of songs that I've never heard before. This LP has three demos: The *Drastic Measures* demo (1980), *Socially Fucked Up* demo (1981), and the *3 Chord Politics* demo (1982). A good amount of the stuff on here was rerecorded for their early EPs; there's also a version of one of my favorite 7 SECONDS songs, "Fuck Your Amerika," off of the *Not so Quiet…* comp. Although this is a pretty budget bootleg, it's still a pretty worthy purchase for any 7 SECONDS fan. (PL)
(bootleg, no address)

ADRENALIN O.D. – "The Wacky Hi-Jinks of..." CD

New Jersey's AOD was one of the first hardcore bands to inject fun lyrics and antics into their music, along with Australia's HARD-ONS (and, to a lesser extent, the DESCENDENTS, I guess)...just don't call it "funcore." Nutty intros, silly instrumentals, played fast and ultra catchy, sometimes they didn't get a fair shake from more "serious-minded" punkers, but they were always one of my favorite bands and never really put a foot wrong in my estimation. *The Wacky Hi-Jinks of…* is their first LP, released in '84, and according to the liner notes this reissue comes on the 25th anniversary of its original release (though surely that would be next year, right???) on their own Buy Our Records label. The album comes as a two-disc set, the second disc including their *Let's Barbeque* EP from 1983, plus an additional two studio sets (one of which is the WFMU radio session) and a live set. Both discs together contain a whopping 48 tracks! Along with 1986's *Humungousfungusamongus*, and 1988's *Cruising With Elvis in Bigfoot's UFO*, this is essential listening from one of the '80s most overlooked bands. I'd kill to have seen these guys live, but I was an ocean away. I don't even know if they ever made it to Europe, though I know that they were very popular there. A seriously great band who never took themselves too seriously! (AD)
(Chunksaah, PO Box 977, Asbury Park, NJ 07712, www.chunksaah.com)

AFTER THE FIGHT – "No Brownie Pie, Same old Sh" CD**

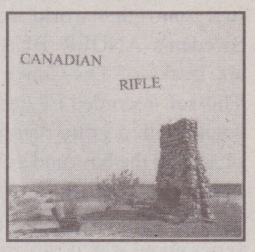
Middle-of-the-road, mid-tempo, melodic punk from Middle America—Elgin, Illinois, to be exact. AFTER THE FIGHT is very uninspired and formulaic. I'm on the third track, and there is no way I'm going to make it all the way to track 18. It's so safe and droll. I might like this if it was 1994 and I was twelve years old. (AD)
(Bone, www.afterthefight.com)

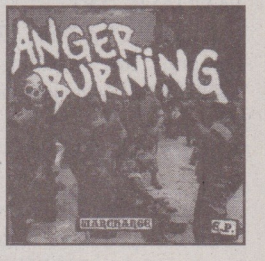
AMERICAN CHEESEBURGER / CANADIAN RIFLE – split EP

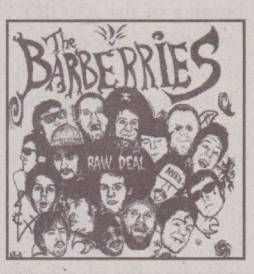
I listened to the AMERICAN CHEESEBURGER side of this record first. This is my first exposure to the band, and I'm pretty impressed. They remind me of NINE SHOCKS TERROR or BILL BONDSMEN. However, I'm hearing some parts super reminiscent of other songs…like, maybe they are borrowing a bit more of some cool riffs then they should? Maybe they are simply reminding me of cool shit I like? And maybe I should have paid attention to this band a while ago? It's just *that name*. Sheesh. CANADIAN RIFLE side up, and I'm loving it. Got to see 'em play a few weeks ago, and they were fucking great. They contain an ex-member of FOURTH ROTOR, and any fan of that band should definitely check this out. Cool harmonies—I'm thinking if Vic Bondi sang and wrote a few songs for HÜSKER DÜ, they'd sound something real similar to this. Definitely worth seeking out! (VL)
(self-released, 385 South Peter St, Athens, GA 30601)

THE ANCHOR / O PIONEERS – split EP

O PIONEERS plays that noisy, decadent racket that put







me off hardcore in the early '90s. A little too close to screamo pukefest for me, sorry. THE ANCHOR is a little closer to the street, if you know what I mean. They have more of a traditional (almost posi-core) sound that reminds me of the post-DAG NASTY bands of the early '90s. Hmm, I guess there's a real early-'90s feel to this record, then. THE ANCHOR's sound seems very genuine. They have definitely done their homework. This could be any of those first FACE TO FACE EPs. This record is half good. (AD)
(Triumph of Life, 215 Robin Dale Dr, Berlin, CT 06037, www.tolrecords.com)

ANGER BURING – "Warcharge" EP

Just as Swedish bands like ANTI-CIMEX and DISARM ingested DISCHARGE and vomited onto the world something even viler, Sweden's ANGER BURNING blasts through six tracks of Dis-Cimex style hardcore punk. This self-recorded EP keeps true to the piss-raw sound with a gritty recording. There is a bit of phaser on the bass and guitar that brings the first ASOCIAL single to mind. This is all intentional and genre-specific music right down to the lyrics about war, destruction, and fear. Although songs about war are as relevant today as they have been in the past, I can't help but get annoyed when lyrics emulate what has historically been penned for the style. I am a fan of genre-specific music, especially when it is done this well, but to me the lyrics could have a bit more personality. All of that aside, this is a killer record that fits in nicely with other current Swedish *dislickers* like FY FAN and DH PAMOASH. (SE)
(La Vida Es Un Mus, 178 Trelawney Estate – Paragon Rd, London E96PQ, UNITED KINGDOM, www.lavidaesunmus.com)

ANGRY SAMOANS – "Inside My Brain" LP

Here's a record you've hopefully heard so often that you have it memorized. If not, this bootleg of the ANGRY SAMOANS' debut 12" provides a slate of classic funny-punk that transcends the band's SoCal roots. "Get Off the Air" should sound dated, but its satire on the SoCal punk scene still holds water, as do most of the other songs. If you're worrying about whether their follow-up is included, there's good news: the *Queer Pills* EP, veering into hardcore territory, shows the band at their snot-nosed best, including the classic "Stupid Jerk" and "They Saved Hitler's Cock." Superior punk and punkish hardcore from '78-'79. (SS)
(bootleg, no address)

ANTIDOTE – "Thou Shalt Not Kill" LP

This looks like a Euro boot of the rare and classic ANTIDOTE EP (legitimately reissued on CD not too long ago, and possibly still available) with a 1983 CBGB's set on the B-side. In my opinion, *Thou Shalt Not Kill* is the best early-'80s NYHC single—better than AGNOSTIC FRONT, THE ABUSED, THE MOB, NO THANKS, even URBAN WASTE. Only the REAGAN YOUTH 12" can compare… Of course, the record is forever marred by the xenophobic attitudes in the lyrics to the song "Foreign Job Lot" that rail against immigrants opening businesses in the US (though, to be fair, the song seems somewhat ambivalent and open-ended: "I cannot get a job because there's no place to work / Oh my god, don't look to me, I feel like such a jerk / … Perhaps we should just relocate"). The sound quality for the EP tracks is decent, though there must have been a scratch on the source material because the sound drops out for a second on one of the tracks. The live stuff on the flip, while not what I'd call essential, includes some unreleased stuff, and is definitely listenable despite the annoying little pauses between the songs that I suspect come from someone in the tape-trading chain burning a CD-R off their computer. This particular LP includes an insert with the lyrics and a reprint of an interview with the singer from 1997. (CS)
(bootleg, no address)

ANTI-PLAYAX – "Valencia Marca Registrada" LP

Very modern-sounding light hardcore and punk from Valencia, Spain. The playful poppyness of this reminds me of bands like THE SCHOOL JACKETS or TOTAL FURY. This is well executed, and you can tell these guys love HC punk, but it's not working for me personally. There is a REAGAN YOUTH cover. (RR)
(Trabuc, PO Box 160, 46740 Carcaixent [Valencia], SPAIN, www.nodo50.org/trabucrecords)

THE ANXIETIES – "The Next Mutation" CD

Hell yeah! This one surprised me. Why have I never heard of this band before? Upon listening to this, I would have guessed that THE ANXIETIES are from Denton or Austin or somewhere from the Southwest, just judging by other bands that have come from there that sound similar. A quick web search reveals that they're from Portland, OR of all places. When I think of Portland, I think crust—heavy, dark crust. This couldn't be further from that. It's is some fast rock 'n' roll-influenced punk, sounding somewhat like THE REDS or a snottier version of THE MARKED MEN. See the Texas references? There's not much more to say, other than these guys know how to rock! (BD)
(Lab Rat Industries, 5713 NE 10th Avenue, Portland, OR 97211, www.labratindustries.com)

ARGUMENT 545 – "Thousands of Birds" CD

Out of Russia, this band plays a brand of hardcore similar to mid-'90s Boston metal-core. Most of their riffs sound straight-up taken from bands like CAVE IN and CONVERGE. Not really my thing, but better than most other bands I hear that play this style. (PL)
(Old School Kids, PO Box 64, 109147 Moscow, RUSSIA, www.oskrecords.com)

THE ASHAMED – CD

This 14-song CD really didn't do much for me. It reminded me of the horrible mid-'90s—a time when overproduced, vomit-inducing tripe was sent out to every suburban kid slightly interested in punk. We all experienced it at one time or another, in various forms, the notables being JUGHEAD'S REVENGE or STRUNG OUT. THE ASHAMED, mind you, does not necessarily sound like the aforementioned bands, but do resemble that same form of punishment every twelve-year old at the time had to endure. (RM)
(Unrepentant, www.unrepentantrecords.com)

THE BARBERRIES – "Raw Deal" EP

Sometimes the best records come in the stupidest covers. Cartoon drawings of people just annoy the shit out of me. Fortunately, THE BARBERRIES have released a great record so I won't mind having this cover lying around my living room. This is jangly pop garage rock from Atlanta, GA. The guitars are reverb-drenched surf and the rhythms are stompy and oh-so-catchy. I especially like the dual vocals from the guy with the deep, gruff voice and the guy with the sweet, soft voice. I'd be surprised if THE BARBERRIES don't have something to do with the BLACK LIPS. If not, they are at least their semi-demented musical protégées. An excellent record. (CK)
(Barberrie Sound, fuzzandjangle67@aol.com)

BEASTIE BOYS – "Pollywog Stew" LP

I remember thinking this was such crap when I first heard it back in the mid/late '80s. I liked the couple of songs that were on the essential *New York Thrash* comp, but this EP seemed so basic and flippant that I passed my copy on to someone else. By that time, THE BEASTIE BOYS had already started getting popular with all the assholes in my high school when *Licensed to Ill* was released. I thought that album was so annoying and moronic, and the kids who listened to it, at least in my shitty hometown of Ft. Lauderdale, FL, were embodiments of everything I fucking hated about the people I was forced to live around: low mentality, wanna-be gangsta, beat-up-skaters-ten-on-one fucking douche bags. Now, to be fair, this wasn't the fault of this band, but watch some old videos and you'll see that they were definitely in no way involved with their punk roots anymore. I used to tell people occasionally that

THE BEASTIE BOYS were originally a hardcore band, but nobody cared or even knew what I was talking about (ah, the good ol' days!). I remember seeing copies of *Pollywog Stew* in the rap section of used record stores and I would laugh to myself thinking about how many clueless tools must have picked it up and have been absolutely horrified! Anyway, as we all know, these fellas became much cooler, even with their hip hop stuff, as the '90s came along. Revisiting this EP, which originally came out on Rat Cage Records in '82 as a 7", and then as a 12", I can now actually appreciate the songs much more. Yes, the lyrics are pretty stupid for the most part, but the fast, early NYHC style is music to my ears. And you can't be without classics such as "Riot Fight," "Egg Raid on Mojo," and "Holy Snappers." This bootleg gives you all eight studio tracks (which are available on the official *Some Old Bullshit* album), but you also get an entire live set of marginal sound quality recorded in 1982 at CBGB on the flip side. Essential? Maybe not, but these early tracks are definitely worth hearing if you dig classic old school hardcore. (BG)
(bootleg, no address)

THE BEATITUDE – "... And the Bag of Cacophony" CD

Weirdo dance party. Sing-a-long lyrics, non-boots 'n' pants dance beats, evil skuzzy sounding three-chord guitars. It sneaks in political stuff here and there, and everyone sings at the same time a lot. It's like if THE B-52'S were trying to play grunge and grew up listening to garage punk and possibly spent a lot of time at those protests that everyone ends up chanting at. Here and there a violin moves to the forefront and it's kind of irritating and out of place. At points it sounds like it could be a montage in a movie about misfit teens working on some kind of quirky takeover plan. (MM)
(Heptown, www.heptownrecords.com)

BEAUTIFUL TRAPS – "Wooden Skull" EP

I'm not quite sure what to make out of this 7". The songs are real soft in a kind of TOM PETTY AND THE HEARTBREAKERS kind of way. They have songs that could so easily be radio-rock songs, but they are just a little too fucked up and weird to ever fit in with that crowd. They might fit more into the arty indie rock kind of scene. But *fuck*, man, can these guys ever write some fucking beautiful songs. They're actually kind of touching. They have good harmonies, good melodies, and good song structure. It's like the softer PAVEMENT stuff recorded on a four-track. But there is still that part of every song with the slight gleam of punk in it. The beauty by which they pull this off and make it sound amazing reminds me of 50 MILLION. (They aren't nearly as good as 50 MILLION, but honestly, in my eyes, no one is.) (FS)
(self-released, 819 Kimball St, Philadelphia, PA 19147)

BLACK DOVE – "No Future, No Fate" LP

Ever since hearing the BLACK DOVE demo that was recorded in 2005, I've been waiting for those five songs to make it to the vinyl format. Here, they are combined with four more songs from the former guitarist/vocalist of THE AWAKENING that might as well be the continuation of his former band. If you ever had even an ounce of respect for THE AWAKENING, then BLACK DOVE is a band you should definitely check out. They have elements of epic metal, crust, hardcore, and everything in between, and they somehow manage to mold and combine those influences into a hardcore punk sound that is original and invasive. The lyrics, although somewhat reminiscent of early 20th century fantasy literature, have the right kind of politics at their core and match the music well. Gone now are the bicycle-friendly songs of yesteryear. These are dark days, and BLACK DOVE pretty much nails it with depressing silhouettes of torture and anguish. From what I remember, I liked the recording of the demo better than on this record, because of the more metallic edge and altogether darker sound, but I really shouldn't be complaining because this record is absolutely crushing. It just needs to be turned up to ten. (WK)
(Solar Funeral, PO Box 2192, Heath, OH 43056, www.solar-funeral.org)

BLACK ORPHAN – "Circuits" EP

Looks like this may be an ex-SPITS project. This sounds familiar and really good... at least the first song. The last three are definitely good too, but not quite as memorable as the first. Like the guitar player (or drummer) from THE SPITS drank some cough syrup and jammed with the dude(s?) from DEAD LUKE or BLANK DOGS. More lo-fi synth/new wave/glue-wave punk, and even though I wanted to be a hater 'cause there seems to be no shortage of this style floating around, I can't be 'cause this is good. What sets BLACK ORPHAN apart is that they're more guitar-driven than a lot of bands with a similar aesthetic, and the drum sounds are more real and plodding than what I'm accustomed to hearing. Nice. (P$)
(UFO Dictator, PO Box 19083, Kalamazoo, MI 49019, www.ufodictator.com)

BLASE DEBRIS – "Morfiend" CD

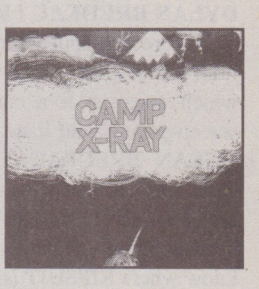
Once I had to sit through a PRONG set because they were on a BULLET LAVOLTA and CORROSION OF CONFORMITY show. So when I see a band like these self-proclaimed "horror punk" folks with long black hair and dressed in black, I think of PRONG. I really hated PRONG and I really hate this. I know—"MISFITS, dude." Bad rock with wannabe DANZIG vocals that actually doesn't sound that much like PRONG but still isn't worth seeking out. (RL)
(Altercation, www.altercationrecords.com)

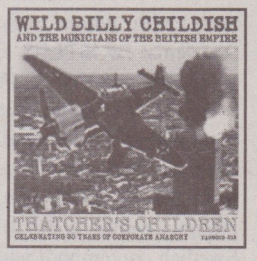
BLATANT FINGER – "Eight for the Road" CD

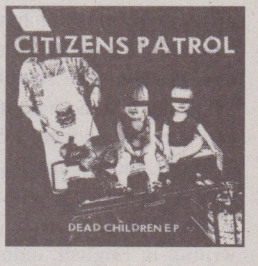
Mid-tempo punk from Ohio with a slight street feel and a big rock production. It's very SOCIAL D dudes. It's a little slow and bar rock for me, but not that bad. I was going to pan it, but then deleted what I wrote as the last song wasn't too bad... What I'm trying to say is—I don't really like it, but it doesn't disgust me or anything. (AD)
(89, no address)

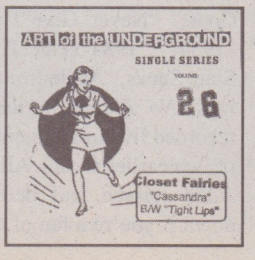
BLOCKSHOT – "After the Beep" CD

They call themselves "keyboard-driven riot grrrl punk," but there is no rage here really, just kind of bad melodies and anti-technology lyrics. It just sounds like bad early-'90s minimalist pop. EDIE BRICKELL? That's kind of harsh; it's not that jammy. There's not a whole lot going









on—it's mostly simple melodies that are pretty horrible. The girl can't sing, which normally I like, except here it sounds like she's trying to sound really good, like when people get serious about karaoke. The lyrics are rhyme-filled and obvious, and it just sounds like they are singing and playing like they think they should, not the way that they do. (MM)
(F-Spin, www.f-spin.de)

DYLAN BREDEAU / RIPSHIT – split EP

This record appears to be a limited tour edition, from what I can tell. DIY packaging, which consists of a cut-up manila envelope, screen-printed and hand-numbered out of 150. DYLAN BREDEAU, from Portland, Maine, starts this one out with an early-'90s East Bay feel, a lot like JAWBREAKER—fast with some head-bobbing breakdown type parts. I don't know where RIPSHIT is from, but they seem to know what they're doing. I was expecting something poppier, having listened to the other side of this split. Poppy or not, RIPSHIT lays down some heavy faster hardcore with female vocals, some chanting, and some circle pit-inspiring breakdowns. I'd like to see this band live. I bet they rip shit up! (BD)
(Spicy Soup, 74 Dwight St 2nd Floor, New Haven, CT 06511, www.spicysoup.net)

THE BRISTLES – "No Future in the Past" 2xCD+DVD

Not to be confused with the '90s Jersey pogo punx with whom they shared their name, Sweden's BRISTLES existed from roughly 1982-1985, during which time they released two EPs, a cassette, and appeared on several compilation LPs (including, of course, *MRR*'s *Welcome to 1984*). The band took their cues from the UK punk and Oi! scene of the day, though unlike some of their more notable Swedish contemporaries, they seemed to prefer THE EXPLOITED to DISCHARGE when it came down to it. While this nicely assembled discography doesn't have everything quite in chronological order, you can still witness the band develop their sound from simplistic 1-2-1-2 bashing to a more tightened, focused attack—and later, as evidenced by the last, best (in my opinion), mostly unreleased material, even add touches of melody. Lyrically, THE BRISTLES, perhaps handicapped by the fact that they were writing in English, didn't really explore many topics outside of punk clichés; song titles included "Punx and Skins," "Society," "I Hate Cops," "Never Give Up," "Don't Give Up," "1984," "1984 (Part II)," and, uh, "Teenage Sluts Sucks." Aside from all their studio recordings, *No Future in the Past* has ten tracks recorded live in 1985, plus a DVD with footage of two earlier shows. All in all, a very well executed reissue and definitely worth tracking down if you're a fan of this type of shit. (CS)
(MCR Company, 157 Kamiagu Maizuru, Kyoto 624-0913, JAPAN, www.dance.ne.jp/~mcr)

THE BROTHERS GROSS – "Introducing..." EP

It must be catchy month here at *MRR*. This one comes in the form of pure power pop that carries a distinct '60s sound. Or does it remind of the power pop of the late '70s? Yes, I think that's it. Except that sometimes, it's more pure pop than power pop. And there really are two brothers in the band. And they really are the main songwriters. (And I am not discounting Steve and Alan's contributions.) This one's got four nice cuts. (KK)
(Silly Girl, www.myspace.com/sillygirlrecords)

CAMP X-RAY – "S.A.D.S.U." EP

Mid-tempo noisy rock from Austin. Think slower DRIVE LIKE JEHU/PITCHFORK. It really kinda sludges along. CAMP X-RAY reminds me of something you'd pick up in the clearance bins at Epicenter in the '90s. *This stuff isn't coming back, is it?* (AD)
($4ppd to: Twistworthy, PO Box 4491, Austin, TX 78765, www.twistworthy.com)

CASTET – "Punk Side of the Moon/Kings of Punk" LP

What's with all the cartoon covers on punk records lately? If I saw this thing in the racks at the local record store, I wouldn't even give a second's thought to checking it out. The cover here is some sort of corny *Star Wars* theme, and the name of the album is *Punk Side of the Moon*. That should sort of give you an idea about how seriously the band approaches things. The first album from these delinquents, *Kings of Punk*, had a much cooler POISON IDEA-homage cover with a punk's stomach all beautified with tattoos and knife carvings. This album is squeezed onto the second side of this release. So yes, you get two full albums on one record here, though each side clocks in at around fifteen minutes or so. And that's where the good news comes, because all twenty-five tracks here are energetic, fast, and bring to mind everything from TERVEET KÄDET to DAYGLO ABORTIONS to maybe a little bit of early STALIN. The lyrics are mostly about having fun, getting crazy, going to shows, and so forth, and that can be a nice bit of fresh air amidst all the more angry, political stuff that I generally listen to. The singer has a cool Darby Crash kind of snarl that I like, even though I can't understand a word he's saying since I don't speak Polish (but thankfully English translations are included!). While not awe-inspiring, this album is worth checking out, especially for fans of mid-'80s-sounding Euro hardcore. Cool stuff. (BG)
(Pasazer, PO Box 42, 39-201 Debica 3, POLAND, www.pasazer.pl)

CAVE CANEM / THE HOLY MOUNTAIN – split EP

One side of this split features Germany's CAVE CANEM, playing raging hardcore with the fury and craft of bands such as TRAGEDY or FROM ASHES RISE. But don't expect a Portland-ish clone—they have their own lamenting guitar tone and dynamism. HOLY MOUNTAIN fills the other side with their own brand of hardcore brutality, featuring great vocals and scathing lyrics from Dan (ex-COMBAT WOUNDED VETERAN), and some rad textural (and at times wanky) guitar leads. Really staggering stuff—too bad it's a posthumous release… Or is it? They do have some shows lined up this fall. Hmm. (AA)
(No Idea, PO Box 14636, Gainesville, FL 32604, www.noidea.com)

CHEAP TRAGEDIES – "Days of Our Lies" EP

Man, is this record all over the place. From the pop punk rock 'n' roll tinges of the first track, to the twin-guitar THIN LIZZY-esque outro of "Dallas Confidential," this dirty platter still somehow manages to keep one foot in the hardcore gutter. Though it all makes perfect sense, seeing as there is one Tony Erba in the band (9 SHOCKS TERROR, GORDON SOLIE MOTHERFUCKERS, FACE VALUE, H-100S), knowing his taste for the rock 'n' roll. Think melodic punk played much faster than normal, with more than a few nods to the rock gods. The B-side of this pie starts off with covers of the two GUNS songs, "I'm Not Right" and "Locked Inside," from, in my humble opinion, the second best early-'80s regional comp, *The New Hope,* that featured all Akron/Cleveland bands. The versions are competent but I'm really not a fan of bands recording cover songs. All in all this is an interesting listen but def needs more spins to sink in. (JU)
(No Idea, PO Box 14636, Gainesville, FL 32604, www.noideareords.com)

WILD BILLY CHILDISH AND THE MUSICIANS OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE – "Thatcher's Children: Celebrating 30 Years of Corporate Anarchy" EP

The desperate sounds of WILD BILLY CHILDISH AND THE MUSICIANS OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE are displayed here in the ultimate format—the 7"—to show you fucks what's what… The "musicians of the British Empire" are Nurse Julie, from THE A-LINES, and Wolf from THE BUFF MEDWAYS (with Billy), amongst other Kent-based beat combos. This is punk music at its finest; disgusted, reactionary, catchy, classic in the tradition of the finest 45s. And yes, by classic, we're talkin' "Action! Time! Vision!" *Thatcher's Children* is a fuck-you spit in the face of these post-Blair, mediocrity-soaked, glass-half-empty times.

When Childish snarls, "What she did to them, now they're doing to you," it makes me think of growing up on child benefit in '80s Britain under the iron fist of Maggie, and then of the feeling of total betrayal when the Labour party finally won an election and it proved to be *more of the fucking same*! "Thatcher's children, you said it'd be fun / Now you're staring down the barrel of your own gun." BILLY CHILDISH is a genius, and this is a perfectly Childish A-Side; Nurse Julie's backups providing a balm to the bile of Billy's vengeance... It's the antidote to the boredom, frustration, and constant manipulation of the current age, and I am going to have to get the LP as soon as it ships, judging by this evidence. The cover art was done by Jimmy Caulty of THE KLF, if you care about such things. Jamie Reid did the LP artwork... I am glad Billy Childish is not doing CREAM-lite anymore. I liked seeing THE BUFF MEDWAYS play, but in all honesty never need to hear him cover a HENDRIX song again. This is '77 punk, but it contains the possibilities of the genre and time rather than the postcard punk, clone drone scene. (LG)
(Damaged Goods, www.damagedgoods.co.uk)

CHINA CREEPS – "Our Rules" EP

This band is named (not very well, mind you) after the China Creek Skatepark in wonderful East Vancouver. Skate-rat punk that is meant to be played at the park or a shitty basement where there are always sketchy dudes hanging around and at least one or two fistfights throughout the night. The songs are about skating, drinking, skating, and more skating, and it's the bad kind of skate rock. The CHINA CREEPS are fine for a party, but was a vinyl release necessary? These guitar solos *boooooorrrrring*. This does not make one want to go skate at all. In fact, it makes me want to go home and go to bed. Peace. (RR)
(self-released, 4525 Elgin St, Vancouver BC, V5V 4R9, CANADA)

CITIZENS PATROL – "Dead Children" EP

What you'd expect from No Way Records by now—pummeling, unrelenting early-'80s-styled hardcore. It's fast. It's tight. It's angry. On *Dead Children*, the singer sound like he's trying to channel the guy from URBAN WASTE, and while URBAN WASTE had some of the best vocals on a hardcore record ever, I'm finding little to nothing that makes this EP distinctive. That might say more about me being burnt out on this style of punk than the record or band itself, so take it with a grain of salt. At least these kids are doing a band, putting out records, talking about shit they care about; I'm just an asshole sitting in front of a computer screen... (CS)
(No Way/Crucial Attack, www.nowayrecords.com)

CLOSET FAIRIES – "Cassandra/Tight Lips"

I think it was Allan McNaughton, who, in his column last month claimed that a 7" single was the superior music format. This is a quote: "One perfect, two-and-a-half-minute pop nugget A-side, and a carefully chosen B-side, especially an equally great non-album track, it can't be beaten." Well, I think this was exactly the kind of record Allan was talking about. Side A is a super-catchy pop gem, dripping with '50s rock 'n' roll influence. It reminded me a lot of that WEEZER song "Jamie" but with an EXPLODING HEARTS or REIGNING SOUND vibe. And the B-side is also quite good but in a different way. It's much more garage rock and distorted, not melodic at all, but still catchy. You know that BANANAS song "Don't Touch That Thing"? The B-side is very reminiscent of that song, but without the melodic breakdown at the end. The singer of CLOSET FAIRIES even kind of sings and screams like THE BANANAS in this song. This is a great 7" and just what I needed to renew my faith in Art of the Underground. There was a time when I was not very impressed by the kind of singles they were putting out. A lot seemed like throwaway tracks, like the POTENTIAL JOHNS single. But this record, and a lot of others they've put out recently have been real good. Awesome 7"! (FS)
(Art of the Underground, www.artoftheunderground.com)

COLD WAR – "Bloody Nights" EP

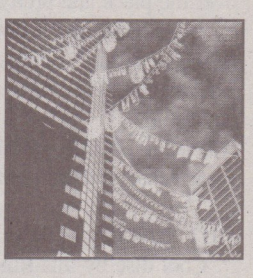
This record is about ten years late. Heavy and fast as fuck powerviolence that easily could have opened Fiesta Grande #3. Reminds me of second-LP-era LACK OF INTEREST with heavier production and a vocalist who is more of a throat-growler. Both which make sense, as it's the same record label and COLD WAR hails from Germany, home to heavy, throaty-growling singers. (VL)
(Deep Six, PO Box 6911, Burbank, CA 91510, www.deepsixrecords.com)

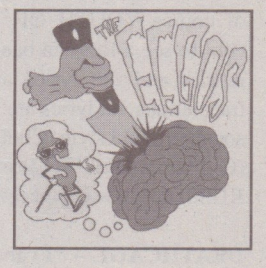
COLD WAR / VÖETSEK – split EP

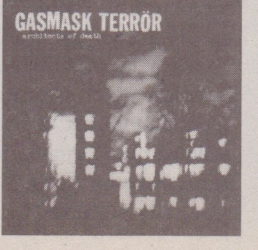
COLD WAR rips through five thrashy powerviolence tracks. There is a part of their sound I can't place. Maybe the early grindcore of fast hardcore bands like HERESY or UNSEEN TERROR? It's fast and chaotic like CROSSED OUT. The more I listened to their tracks, the more I liked them. COLD WAR is from Germany, and they cover the SIEGE track of the same name. Hailing from the Bay Area, California, VÖETSEK has always had lots of metal in their blood, and it seems like they get more metal with every release. Fastcore with metal guitar licks. Lots of fist-throwing metal-metal guitar moments and throat-shredding vocals. I love the guitar work and breakdown in "Someone I Use to Know." "Spent Shells Tell No Tales" is straight-ahead fast hardcore. As a side note, VÖETSEK now has a second guitar player who also plays in the good death metal/grindcore band POPULATION REDUCTION. (MH)
(Deep Six, PO Box 6911, Burbank, CA 91510, www.deepsixrecords.com)

THE CRETEENS / STRAIGHT ARROWS – split EP

THE CRETEENS push out a couple of tasty fuzz-grinders that are well worth the time. Mid-tempo and catchy, both tracks have a level of distortion that I've always liked. I am a huge fan of the lo-fi and records like this restore my faith. STRAIGHT ARROWS has a similar sound, but come across as a little more guitar-oriented, at least on the first track. In the end, I think I figured out that it's just marginal mixing, which leaves you with a lot of guitars, some vocals, and the belief that there are drums in there somewhere. They get a little better mix on the second track and it pays huge dividends, with a snotty, fuzzed-out song that is catchy as all hell. Excellent. (KK)
(Resistance A Go-Go, www.myspace.com/resistanceagogo)







LA CRISI – "II: Tutti A Pezzi" CD

Wow, raging hardcore punk with fierce and furious vocals and an unrelenting breakneck pace. It has a classic sound, without borrowing from any band in particular, which I feel is oh-so-rare. Pair that with a charismatic singer with a truly singular personality and voice and you have something really special. (AA)
(Hurry Up, www.hurryuphc.com)

CROSS EXAMINATION / SPRING BREAK – split CD

Another fucking metal album…Jesus H. The cover of this is incredibly striking. Let me leave you, dear reader, with this imagery: a mushroom cloud amongst a city landscape with the Grafix bong guy growing out of the destruction, pouring out 40s of Cammo and Steel Reserve while wearing a t-shirt that has ~~WIMPS~~, yes, crossed out. Fucking radical. CROSS EXAMINATION is first and is pretty fucking good…you know, for metal. These dudes can write a pretty catchy song. Good hooks, cool solos. I'm enjoying it. The singing and guitar parts and vocals remind me of *Bonded By Blood*, one of the best metal albums of all time, without sounding contrived. Only bummer about that one were the drums… played well but sounding poorly tuned. SPRING BREAK is next and is down to harsh your mellow. Gloom and doom—part grind, part sludge, blast-beats and heavy breakdown mosh parts. This is all over the place and pretty much a big mess. I'm having a hard time following the songs as each averages around eight distinct parts. CROSS EXAMINATION wins the beer bong in this contest. (VL)
(Deep Six, PO Box 6911, Burbank, CA 91510, www.deepsixrecords.com)

CUT 'N' RUN – CD

Cool disc by this Russian sXe/HC act, definitely emulating the '80s sXe scene. There are bits of BERAYED, GORILLA BISCUITS, and of course YOUTH OF TODAY there. Pretty cool to see a Russian band playing this style of music, and the lyrics are pretty good (with translations, all lyrics are in Russian) in the personal struggle style. Cool! (NM)
(Old Skool Kids, PO Box 64, 109147 Moscow, RUSSIA. www.myspace.com/oskrecords)

DEATHCAGE – "From Despair To Where" EP

Four tracks of inspired Burning Spirits style hardcore from Sydney, replete with guitar-solo noodling and gnarled, spewed, and shouted vocals a la DEATHSIDE—some are sung in Swedish, which is just silly. Similar energetic, speeding, upbeat tempos carried with guitar melody, quick shout-a-long choruses, and epic intros make for a good fix of this Japanese style, especially since the Japanese scene itself has largely seemed to have progressed from it. Here, the music is banged out in a more raw, DIY recording that has less finesse than Japanese records, which gives it its own quality and power. Pushead-ish stippled cover and lyrics about imprisonment, racism, and breaking free from life's traps. (KS)
(Endless Blockades, www.myspace.com/deathcagesydney)

DEATHSKULLS / SHREDDER – split EP

I put the DEATHSKULLS side on first, thinking it was the A-side of a SHREDDER 7". The artwork (?) on the split is so bad I couldn't tell it was two bands; the *purty* blue/black wax was a nice touch but couldn't help poor DEATHSKULLS. These dudes kinda suck—they have a trebly guitar sound and the I'm-a-heavy-set-serious-type-dude-talking-loudly-into-the-mic type *vokillz*. There is a reference here, but it's not worth it. SHREDDER, on the other hand, came outta nowhere with interesting riffs, fast and furious songs, and a killer snare hits! Definate 625 steez—even a shredding solo! These guys make the split worth a listen. (RM)
(Peter Bower, 666bower@myway.com)

DE HØJE HÆLE – "Rovguitar" EP

Fuck. What is it about the Danes?? Of recent years they have been riding the wave of what's truly ripping in punk rock these days. I know nothing about this record, other than the fact that the copy I am listening to is 125/157!! Really?? There only 157 of these?? Amazingly catchy punk rock: part DEVO, part '70s power-pop, part '60s garage, part Dane-punk. Soooooooo catchy! Top Ten shit right here. Fuck. Now I need to track one down. (TB)
(Repo Man, www.myspace.com/repomanrecords)

DELAY – "Grey Like the Whale/The Oak and the Rose"

Volume 25 of the Art of the Underground 7" series. DELAY plays good melodic punk—it reminds me a lot of RADON. Very catchy, lotsa energy, and good singing. This is happy and upbeat. I can hear a little SMOKING POPES in there too, which is nothing to be ashamed of, believe me. I'd never heard of these guys before but this is great, and now I want to look for other stuff… (AD)
(Art of the Underground, www.artoftheunderground.com)

THE DESIGNER DRUGS – "By RX Only" CD

Lame press sheets usually precede lame CDs. I'd like to be spared the selling points—even this beast; "Label presence on 2008 Warped Tour, Hot Topic chains nationwide." To pin it down, this CD is a mix of rockabilly and what people out of the loop call '77 punk. It's generic. I'd advise they maybe pick up a BAYONETTES record or something if they want to try to rock the AVENGERS influence… see how a current band purveying the AVENGERS/Dangerhouse sound can do it competently. (P$)
(Altercation,www.myspace.com/altercationmagazine)

DOOM SIREN – "Homeland Insecurity" LP

Big grinding hardcore metal from Austin, Texas. Gruff vocals and a big, raw sound that steamrolled right over me, never letting up. DOOM SIREN reminds me a lot of DISRUPT. I like them but I'm not finding the words to describe their sound. The band contains former members of BREAD AND WATER and TERMINAL DISGUST. After a few more listens, I've decided this is good, crusty grindcore. (MH)
(Sick Thought, trekbgh@yahoo.com)

THE DOPAMINES – CD

A little bit of a change from a mostly retro and garage label, It's Alive Records. The press release coins the description "'90s Epi-Fat sound." I like that. Epi-Fat. This is some strong pop punk. I'm thinking GROOVIE GHOULIES, SWEET BABY, DILLINGER FOUR, and any "name that underrated band from the '90s." Solid and fun stuff with an up-tempo chainsaw approach. (RL)
(It's Alive, www.itsaliverecords.com)

DOUBLE DAGGER – "Bored Meetings" EP

Not quite sure what to make of this record… The first song, "Bored Meetings," is fast and repetitive, on the weird side of hardcore: think FAT DAY or something. Next up is a long, sparse, rhythmic post-punk dirge. Then, on the other side is a noisy electronic remix of an older DOUBLE DAGGER song. Nothing about the record is bad, but I don't get any sense of purpose from this scattered approach. When there are only three songs and they all sound completely different, there's not much to grab on to. If you're already a fan of the band, this might be your favorite thing ever. I don't really get it. (AM)
(Toxic Pop, c/o Mike Riley, 2981 Falls Rd, Baltimore, MD 21211, www.toxicpoprecords.com)

DOUBLE DAGGER – "Sophisticated Urban Living" EP

Think post "revolution summer" and the BLOOD BROTHERS. The BLOOD BROTHERS' shit is ridiculous and meaningless. FUGAZI is rad. We'd get along better if DOUBLE DAGGER pulled more from FUGAZI. The charms that are absent here have a lot to do with the delivery of the vocals (annoying) and

less to do with the music (not horrible). If you're in the market for a bass and drum combo, XYX or SONOROUS GALE would be a safer bet. Too much art school in this cocktail. (P$)
(Terra Firma c/o Scott Russell, 8316 Loch Raven Blvd, Baltimore, MD 21286, scott@terrafirmarecords.com)

EAT SHIT EXPERIENCE – CD

Silly, spastic hardcore and grindcore from France. EAT SHIT EXPERIENCE uses keyboards and drums that sound like a drum machine. The CD travels through a few different sounds, including bad metal hardcore and spazzy grindcore. The first song, "Drunk Mental Experience" is terrible metal hardcore. "We are the Perfect Boyz" is much more interesting spazzy grindcore, and the singer sounds like he's making fun of METALLICA. The keyboard and drum sound annoyed me through most of the CD. My favorite part of this release was the shade of yellow they used in the artwork. (MH)
(I Feel Good, www.jbhs.propagande.org)

EDDY CURRENT SUPPRESSION RING – "Demon's Demands/I'm Guilty"

Two five-minute-plus scuzz-punk drone sessions from a band that might be better known for abrupt garage stabs. Imagine a combination of THE STOOGES and the first FUGAZI 12" EP. Persistent, rhythmic bass lines give way to shards of guitar squall and garbled vocals. Done badly, this type of thing can turn out to be a disaster. Luckily, EDDY CURRENT SUPPRESSION RING managed to turn in a storming little disc. (AM)
(Iron Lung, PO Box 95521, Seattle, WA 98145, ironlungdeath@hotmail.com)

THE EEGOS – "If You Ain't Shaking" EP

This is straightforward, well-played punk rock that could probably just as easily be described as power pop. It's mid-tempo, it's fun, it won't change the world, but I could listen to it all day long. These guys go out of their way to be catchy. (KK)
(Felony Fidelity, no address)

ETACARINAE – "In These Dark Times" CD

Holy shit! These Spaniards play some face-melting, apocalyptic dark crust the way the good lord intended. Picture MISERY, EXTINCTION OF MANKIND, and AMEBIX mixed with some Japanese influences. They even cover a BASTARD song! Beautiful artwork and cool runic stuff blended with AMEBIX-y style layout. The CD booklet is incredible, as has become the rule with the very fine Black Seeds records. Easily a fave of the year. (NM)
(Black Seeds, www.blackseedsrecords.blogspot.com)

EU'S ARSE – "2008" CD

More metallic crust-punk from Italy's EU'S ARSE. I just found out that this band started in the early '80s, not unlike this very magazine. And much as *MRR* still stains your fingers black, EU'S ARSE is still cranking out blistering, repetitive riffs and razor-throated rants against the status quo (the only words of the lyrics I understood). I have to say there's something very endearing about this CD. They don't give a fuck—this is what they do and they're going to keep doing it until they're buried in their studded leather jackets. Good on them. (AM)
(MCR Company, 157 Kamiagu Maizuru, Kyoto, 624-0913, JAPAN, www.dance.ne.jp/~mcr)

FAILING WINTER – "This is not an Album" CD

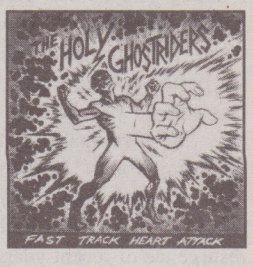
Umm… Have you ever heard that band WOOL that Pete and Franz from SCREAM were in during the early/mid '90s? Well, I was sitting here listening to this FAILING WINTER CD thinking to myself; "I bet this is what WOOL sounds like," since I have zero reference for stuff like this, Sure enough I grab the WOOL 7"s from the collection and it totally sounds like this. Grunge/alternative rock flirting with post-punk elements and some FUGAZI and AmRep-ery thrown in, with the bass really driving the songs through. Where it is, is just kind of blah. (JU)
(Speaker Blast, www.failingwinter.com)

FIGURES OF LIGHT – "Smash Hits" CD

These cats from New *Joizee* released an amazing proto-punk 45 back in 1972, and then like most cool bands they disappeared into obscurity. Luckily, there are dedicated fanatics of rock 'n' roll archaeology like the fine folks over at Norton Records who go out of their way to find these forgotten treasures and make them available to the drooling masses (i.e., the rest of us). I picked up the reissued single recently and dug the nice mix of '60s punk and early '70s VELVETS and SIMPLY SAUCER influences. The sound also brought DENNIS MOST & THE INSTIGATORS and JEFF DAHL to mind. Anyway, if they only did one single, what's with the title *Smash Hits*, right? I'm guessing it's the wishful thinking on their behalf, had they released all the other songs they had written but never recorded. Since no other significant recordings existed outside of the 45 and a live tape, they went back to the studio in 2007 and spawned six new tracks of genuine garage rock mayhem. The newer tracks are a little less VELVET UNDERGROUND and a bit more HASIL ADKINS, but it's still pretty damn punk with tunes like "I'm So Sick of Everything" and "Nothing to Do." As I approach my 40s faster than I'd like, I'm starting to really look up to people like this that are a lot older than me and are still cool. How many reunion bands have you seen where the members have become so pathetic that you want to go lay in the middle of the street afterwards and hope a passing bus will put you out of your pathetic misery? This is one of those infrequent exceptions where the band still throws down, regardless of the graying and receding hairlines. Aside from the original 1972 single and the newly recorded songs, this collection compiles live tracks, both recent and from 1970, including the freak out jam, "Ritual TV Smashing." Sixteen tracks altogether and should be sought after if you dig pre-'77 punk rock 'n' roll. I sure as hell do. (BG)
(Norton, PO Box 646 Cooper Stn, New York, NY 10276, www.nortonrecords.com)

FIX MY HEAD – "Garbage Existence" EP

The vinyl debut from FIX MY HEAD features re-recordings of all four jammies from this Bay Area reckoning force's brilliant 2007 demo, plus one-half of one-half-dozen new jawns. This is burly, negative-vibe hardcore from these four spoilers that will put hair on your puny,



indented chests. It's got elements of all the classic-era hardcore that everyone name-checks in every review, but this record couldn't exist in any other time than now and is fucking creaming with originality—I'd put this very much in line with OUT COLD. Check these bad-time words of wisdom from "Life Is Swell," you cretins: "Get ready, buck up, 'cause life's about to rip you up / Love fades away, your family dies, life falls apart right before your eyes / Nothing you do can prepare for this flood of fucking despair." This record fucking rips and all the riffs are 100% killer. Seriously, these are the perfect hardcore riffs. I urge you all to blast this shit on your headphones and listen to the way the first part in the second verse of "Swirling Vortex" goes from choppy to just riding that fourth note. *Fuuuck* that shit slays! I'm in bliss. If you're feelin' the traditional hardcore resurgence of recent years, this record is one of the best so far and is no way a puff-piece about "what once was." (JU)
(Vinyl Addict, 1835 De Bourgogne, Sherbrooke, Quebec, CANADA, J1J 1B1)

FORMER CELL MATES – "Who's Dead and What's to Pay" CD

I love this band… *love them*. Their first disc still gets rotation 'round our place. This new one is more of the same; imagine if BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN's *Nebraska* was a punk album… that's pretty much what *Who's Dead and What's To Pay* is. Featuring ex-LEATHERFACE members, this disc easily stands up to any of that band's recent releases. Soaring melodies, great vocals and harmonies—this could easily fit on No Idea alongside the likes of RADON, GUNMOLL, etc, just got a little more soul and individuality. My only slight gripe is the cover is a bit weak; that aside this is a monster of a release. Nice. (TB)
(Household Name, PO Box 12286, London, SW9 6FE, UNITED KINGDOM)

FUTURE DADS – "24 Winship" LP

More unearthed treasures from the seemingly never-ending punk rock vaults. 14 tracks from Boston's FUTURE DADS recorded between early 1981 and 1982. The recording and packaging is top-notch and thankfully this has the tunes to match. Veering from all-out power pop to punk rock, taking in some Canadian influences such as THE POINTED STICKS and THE MODERNETTES whilst keeping an eye on the mod revival happenings across the big pond. Quality abounds, which makes this much more than a piece of overlooked punk history. A sound that THE FREEZE took as a blueprint, and what many of the newer breed of power poppers are taking as stable. Excellent. (SD)
(Rave Up, Via Crispolti 16-00159 Roma, ITALY, www.raveuprecords.com)

FUTURE PHONES – "Tourist" EP

What can I say? It's that kind of worlds-going-to-end-but-we're-triumphant type of punk, the kind that's accessible and sort of danceable but completely divorced from mainstream anything. Lots of barked out girl-boy vocals over riffs that sound like they are bursting apart at the seams—pretty chaotic and noisy. They do what they do well. (MM)
(self-released, 2317 14th Ave. S, Seattle, WA, 98144)

GASMASK TERRÖR – "Architects of Death" EP

Imagine the sound of a hammer pounding the ground in perfect rhythm to drive an animal into a manic frenzy. That pounding is the sound of reckless abandon; a nail plunged deep into your heart. This is the sound of terror and rage that is lacking in so many bands—and it is scary good. GASMASK TERRÖR plays the perfect, static-laced hardcore that is reminiscent of ANTI-CIMEX at their finest. Their lyrics cover the massive conformity of the politically immobilized punk/activist scene that wallows in the satisfaction of re-living the lyrical protest songs and slogans of the generations before them. From the onset of this record, GASMASK TERRÖR pummels forward with full-throttle punk that excites as well as incites. The songs are perfect in length and composition. It almost seems effortless. (WK)
(Flower of Carnage, www.flowerofcarnage.com)

GENTLEMAN JESSE AND HIS MEN– LP

The *I Don't Want To Know* single has been a regular fixture on my turntable since whenever it was that it came out, so I was over the moon with expectation to see this gem in my review pile. Nothing on here has grabbed me the way that song did (yet), but there are quite a few songs that are starting to subtly get under my skin. One thing is for sure: Jesse knows how to craft an intelligently catchy pop song. Don't let the simplicity fool you. The recording is pristine (maybe a bit *too* clean), but it's far from sterile. The chiming guitars suggest a complete absence of effects or gimmicks—just pure '60s/'70s power pop. Near the end of the record, the one-two punch of "Wrong Time" and the exquisitely titled "If I Can See You (You're Too Close To Me)" has me reaching for the needle to go back and listen again. One of the best pure pop records I've heard in years, and one that'll be on the decks for a while to come, I'm sure. (AM)
(Douchemaster, PO Box 5209, Atlanta, GA 31107, www.douchemasterrecords.com)

GERDT – "Auschwitz" EP

Finnish crust attack fronted by Hanna, whose vocals make us aware that she is prepared for battle. I cannot tell you what GERDT is singing about because there were no translations provided in this tiny, minimal picture sleeve. Overall mid-paced-to-fast hardcore with buzz-saw guitars and enough low-end bass to give this platter some kick. (MS)
(self-released, www.gerdt.tk.com)

GONE WITH THE PAIN / OPTIMUS PRIME – split CD

Wow. Is this band really named after a *Transformer*…? That is terrible. They are Russian so I'll let 'em have it…but c'mon guys! More fucking screamo! I *hate* this shit. OPTIMUS PRIME goes for the quiet introspection tempered with bursts of harsh hardcore, whereas GONE WITH THE PAIN is the full-bore screamo attack. I am not a fan of this genre except for bands with great songwriting chops like THE SHIVERING. Niet. (TB)
(Old Skool Kids, PO BOX 64, 109147 Moscow, RUSSIA. www.myspace.com/oskrecords)

THE GYNECOLOGISTS – "1981-1994 The Official Recordings" CD

A no-brainer for KBD oldies/etc. fans. Truth to tell, I was only familiar with THE GYNECOLOGISTS' *Feces & Psychopaths*, which I thought a solid novelty (as punk records are perhaps ultimately supposed to be: refer to Stewart Home's *Cranked Up Really High*), but there's mucho herein that eclipses that first EP. As expected from a retrospective CD of 30 tracks, there are a handful of songs that are more of "historical interest" than solid listening, but there's enough of the latter to make this worth a look. (DD)
(Gulcher, www.gulcher.gemm.com)

HARRINGTON SAINTS / SLICK 46 – split EP

Mike Josephson and his Longshot Music label have a smash hit record out this month! Oakland's local hooligans THE HARRINGTON SAINTS kick off the festivities with two up-tempo Oi! tunes that harken back to the halcyon days of the COCKNEY REJECTS circa 1980. "Claret and Blue" has all the subtle West Ham references. This Oi! number is a ton-o-fun! THE HARRINGTON SAINTS follow up with a glorious beer-fueled skinhead anthem called "Pub Song." Excellent! Side B features Australian rockers SLICK 46 with two street-rock numbers that will have you lifting your beer mug and smiling from ear-to-ear. We warm up with song one "Lies and Tricks." Good shit! Next up, you hit the ground running with song two, "For You, Not Me." This second tune has many favorable UK SUBS type accoutrements—it's a rocker!! Order your copy of the HARRINGTON SAINTS / SLICK 46 split EP now! (BR)
(Longshot, 980 Harrison St, San Francisco, CA 94107, www.longshotmusic.com)

HERPES – "Tod Von Nem Disco-Tanzer" EP

European *Killed By Death* by way of DEVO-style new wave and they're just fucking nailing it! Quirky new wave-garage-punk. It's fucking impressive they could pull this off. Unique and kinda frantic jamz that stand erect while moving to the beat. Surprise insta-classic. I wouldn't mind hearing HERPES get a little more quirky or aggressive in the future… but for right now, this shit's gold. Recommended. (P$)
(How Much Art Can You Take?, PO Box 2203, Dayton, Ohio 45401, www.howmuchartcanyoutake.com)

THE HOLY GHOST RIDERS – "Fast Track Heart Attack" CD

Super burly punk rock mixed with some stomping tough-guy hardcore and a dose of Southern rock. A three-in-one deal, which makes THE HOLY GHOST RIDERS this month's money-saver recommendation. A more direct AVAIL with a husky, sandpapered Gainsville feel, nicely rounded it of with the odd LYNYRD SKYNYRD guitar noddling. Soild. (SD)
(Learning Curve, www.learningcurverecords.com)

IMAGINARY ICONS – LP

One song into this seven-track gem and I'm hooked. Post-punk herky-jerky bleakness tackled by a bunch of punks, which lends it the energy usually devoid in this scene. One-part BUZZCOCKS, two-parts MISSION OF BURMA, three-parts FRUSTRATION, and while I'm at it, a big dirty spoonful of WIRE. The 12" format is perfect. (SD)
(Daggerman, www.daggermanrecords.com)

INFÄME – LP

With the LP jacket displaying a DYSTOPIA-styled collage of various Japanese imagry—motorcycle cops, skyscrapers, the "Kentucky" Colonel Sanders, samurai, and GISM-styled medical elements—this Spanish band wears its influences on its sleeve. More than a direct Japanese hardcore mimicry, however, these eleven tracks regurgitate more of the BASTARD-via-TRAGEDY influence with similar guitar-driven, melodic, metallic hardcore. A really solid, inventive dose of this style, with awesome guitar parts, melody, and song structures, but ultimately this record is just completely killed, like the old French band ONCLE SLAM (probably the most obscure reference in a magazine of obscure references, yet spot on the money), by gurgle-y, super-distorted, almost cartoon-ish vocals. Tokurow (BASTARD, JUDGEMENT) could pull these kinds of vocals off because the entire surrounding was as extreme as his distorted vocalization. Billy's vocals in TRAGEDY tread this same balance, but also measure it out with a second vocalist. Here, clear back-up vocals shine with resounding clarity when they pop up, as the contrast between them and the cleanly recorded, practiced melodic metallic bashing is not as substantial and jarring. Might-lose-something-in-the-translation lyrics are about gladiators, dying relationships, cultural imperialism, technology, perfume, and sex. (KS)
(Grita O Muere, Apdo 37020, 08080 Barcelona, SPAIN, www.myspace.com/gritaomuere)

JACK OF HEART – "San Francisco/Ponytail"

JACK OF HEART is a new, more subdued project from wild Frenchmen that also spend time in MIGHTY GO-GO PLAYERS and CRETEENS. The focus isn't on audio punishment here, though there is a whole lotta *loud*. JACK OF HEART is about the songs, for once. "San Francisco" smolders and builds to an eruption that never comes… You just realize the eruption is the tune itself. Good. "Ponytail" is much more playful—a vague '60s garage feel meshed with a barroom waltz vibe. Better. (MC)
(Rob's House, www.robshouserecords.com)

JERK ALERT – "Dirty Slurs" LP

Wow. This is not what I was expecting, which just goes to show that you really shouldn't judge a book by its cover. I was thinking I was in for some poppy punk, maybe even some new wave. Nope. This is punk rock, my friends, in the style of hardcore. That's right. Not only that, JERK ALERT has got a female vocalist who is just as happy growling or screaming as she is singing, which makes for a nice combination. It's melodic and catchy at some points, and fast and angry others. This is really good stuff. The back cover tells me that JERK ALERT spends their downtime drinking mostly bad beer and cheap wine. I did spot one bottle of Sierra Nevada Pale Ale, which makes me hopeful. (KK)
(Eradicator, 522 West 4th St, Bloomington, IN 47404)

JESUS FUCKING CHRIST – "Life's Hateful Seed" LP

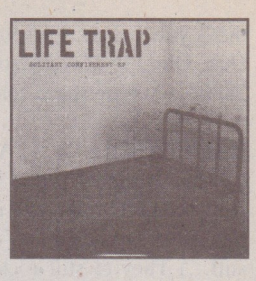
The Bay Area's JESUS FUCKING CHRIST is back with their second LP. They play hard-hitting traditional HC punk, mostly in the American vein but not without some British influences. I suppose it would be easy to compare them to later POISON IDEA, but also somewhat accurate. Great nuts and bolts stuff. This LP is limited to 666 copies. (NM)
(Inimical, www.inimicalmusic.com)

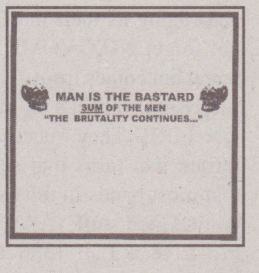
JUMPERCABLE – "EP" CD

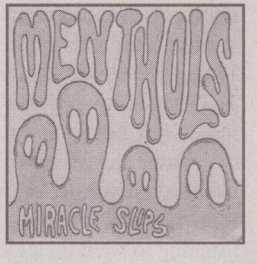
These Jersey kids take the modern hardcore sound and pump out a nice CD of melody and crunch. A good pace throughout and breakdowns that are moshy but fit their songs really well. I like the vocals a lot as they give a bit of needed originality to JUMPERCABLE's style and sound. Sing-alongs and finger pointing on this one fer sure, but they don't beat you over the head with tough guy stuff or the über posi shtick. I like this, but bet their next effort will be worth the five bux! Reminds me of RED HANDED and a less crazy OUTBREAK. (RM)
(Monkey Wrench, www.myspace.com/monkeywrench records)

JUST DIE! – "No Time For Poetry" CD

On first listen, I just want to dismiss this as being completely irrelevant to my life. On second listen, I haven't been converted. Fast, shouty, posi-core that sounds earnest as fuck. There are some catchy riffs and choruses and the odd GORILLA BISCUITS harmonics, but for the most part the grinding desperation of the music belies the open, hopeful positive attitude of the lyrics. I'm sure they're the nicest guys, and there are certainly many people who will be all over this. It's just not for me. The press sheet says they're for people into "good times and high fives." If







that's you, please order this disc. (AM)
(Just Die!, 19 Ravenscroft Ln, Asheville, NC 28803, www.myspace.com/justdiehardcore)

KAKISTOCRACY – "An Apology" EP

This North Carolina band seems to have really come into its own in recent years. (Well, this record was recorded way back in 2005, but still…) They're still rockin' the groove-heavy epic melodi-crust FROM ASHES RISE sound, but it stands on it own. There's a moment where things do start to fall apart, but it works for KAKISTOCRACY better than it would work for most bands of this style. Three heavy and catchy crust-ified tunes with two chaps trading off on the vocal duties. The B-side track, "An Apology," is the standout. Despite this straightforward review, I'm diggin' in. (JU)
(Halo of Flies, c/o Cory von Bohlen, 430 E. Lloyd St, Milwaukee, WI 53212, www.myspace.com/haloofflesrcds)

KAKISTOCRACY / NUX VOMICA – split EP

I have to say that you would be hard-pressed to name two finer examples of crushing melodic crust than the bands featured on this split. Asheville's KAKISTOCRACY espouses anarchist and environmentalist ideals without treading in the steps of countless other political hardcore bands. Instead, the lyrics are personal and more powerful than cheap sloganeering. They also get extra points for vocals that are as brutal and raging as their music—no easy feat. Let's not forget NUX VOMICA, who hits the same target but comes from a more metallic place; not surprising since it's ex- members of WAKE UP ON FIRE. They succeed in the quiet, pretty refrain that turns into seething, unbridled rage that most bands in this genre try to pull off but don't. Good stuff. (AA)
(To Live a Lie, 1306 Flint Pl, Raleigh, NC 27605, www.tolivealie.com)

KING GENERATOR – LP

Holy fuck, this one-sided 12" is *beautiful*!! Tank Crimes has really outdone themselves. The vicious cover art is screened on heavy cardstock with lyrics on the back, while the vinyl has a laser-etched image on the other side!! CD included so you jet-setting iPud punx can perform random acts of violence on Muni while listening to what the promo sticker calls "brutal fast hardcore violence." Recruits from bands like MUNICIPAL WASTE, SHANK, and fucking ANODYNE put this project together. Unfortunately I think the hype overwhelmed me, and KING GENERATOR did not live up to the Dave Witte/ANODYNE train-wreck I was hoping for. (RM)
(Tank Crimes, PO Box 3495, Oakland, CA 94609, www.tankcrimes.com)

KUOLEMA / REVEREND BIZARRE – split CD

A two-track split CD with bonus live video clips. The first track is from veteran Finnish doom metal band REVEREND BIZARRE, who has been around since 1995 and plays old school doom. Think bands like CATHEDRAL or CANDLEMASS. The song they've included is a cover of Finnish comedian/actor SIMO SALMINEN's song from the '60s.The track is slow, heavy, and short for them, clocking in at 4:33. The vocals are sung and a bit strange, and the lyrics are in Finnish. I've never heard the original version of this song, but I think it was folk/pop from the descriptions I've read. I liked this track. Their video is a fairly high-quality handheld camera shot of a 20-minute set from a 2005 Washington, DC show. They come across as a bit more bar rock in the video—the guitars just aren't loud or heavy enough. KOULEMA is an '80s Finnish noisy punk/hardcore band who I didn't realize reformed. On this disc, they cover '70s Finnish punk band EPPU NORMAALI. Their track is sloppy punk with drunken vocals, and for some reason reminds of a good, noisy punk band drunkenly covering "Louie Louie." The KOULEMA video is shot from multiple cameras at what looks like a house show, and they play great late-'80s-sounding hardcore, but the vocals are even stranger live. There are parts of an interview in between some of the tracks. (MH)
(MCR Company, 157 Kamiagu Maizuru, Kyoto, 624-0913, JAPAN,www.dance.ne.jp/~mcr)

KURSK / LYCANTHROPHY – split EP

Danimal, my roommate, *fumed* over this band LYCANTHROPHY. Apparently they spelled the word wrong? I don't know what an 18-pack and a GED are supposed to give you authority over, but he took it. These Czechs aren't messing around though, even if they don't spell so good. Grind-yer-face-off bashing with screams that are supposed to inform the listener of issues ranging from faith to fur farms. *Brue-tal*. KURSK has a super urgent sound that makes me want…more? Louder? Nothing? Something… Very interesting with walking riffs and manic drumming. These Canadians remind me of EBULLITION at its best (although that comparison is a bit of a stretch!). (RM)
(Halo of Flies, 430 E Lloyd St, Milwaukee, WI 53212, www.haloofflesrecords.com)

LABOR PARTY – "Hellhound Down" CD

Despite the pulp novel pisstake photo on the cover that misses the mark (the lettering and assembly isn't evocative enough of old pulps), this is really strong punk 'n' roll from Phoenix similar to RANCID, with croon-y vocals, SOCIAL DISTORTION-ish pulp novel lyrical themes, and wailing rock-guitar overdrive, but worked up into a strong, beer-soaked, slam-your-glass-on-the-bar-and-jump-on-the-dance-floor garage rock lather rather than the slick pop punk those references might suggest—especially when LABOR PARTY cranks out on the slide guitar. Solidly rockin' and catchy punk anthems, with searing solos, cool female back-up vocals, and strong no-frills solid drumming that fits the style perfectly. Lyrics about hard livin', living outside the mainstream, hard livin', lovin', and punk rock Christmas! An impressive DIY effort with the band writing, recording, mastering, and performing its own material with great results. (KS)
(Steel Cage, PO Box 29247, Philadelphia, PA 19125, www.steelcagerecords.com)

LAGWAGON – "I Think My Older Brother Used to Listen To..." CD

A new seven-song release from these local punk poppers, and not a bad tune in the bunch. Unlike other melodic bands that have wandered off to acoustic and indie rock genres, these vets keep the hooks coming with a simple beat and chunky bar chords. Makes me want to break out my DESCENDENTS downloads... errr, I mean records. One of the best pop bands still around. (RL)
(Fat Wreck, www.fatwreck.com)

LESSER KNOWN NEUTRINOS – "New Language" LP

I feel like I just walked into some weird nerd lair. Various electronics that sound like something between ancient video game soundtracks and medieval times. And it's got a viola that sounds like it's being played at a ren faire. The vocals sound like something in between super aggressive madrigals and screamo. Even the parts where they scream sound like Gollum or some other type of mythical beast. All the lyrics are about ancestors, apocalypse, planetary crusades, and other various fantasy novel topics. It's really unique and weird, but I don't really relate. It's like the meeting of Dungeons & Dragons and punk. (MM)
(LKN, 1103 S. Wilton St, Philadelphia, PA 19143)

LIFE TRAP – "Solitary Confinement" EP

This is LIFE TRAP's second 7" release on No Way Records. It's right up there with their last one—raw and powerful hardcore that's melodic but tough sounding. This reminds me of bands like CIA or KORO—great, solid hardcore. (PL)
(No Way, www.nowayrecords.com)

LIVE FAST DIE / LOVER! – split EP

Some very amusingly titled songs from each band on this split. LOVER! delivers "Booger In My Asshole" and LIVE FAST DIE brings "Sick

as Shit of Shit." Going on pure gross-out factor, LOVER! wins. Just the picture of him sticking that booger in his asshole has my skin crawling, and I am not usually that squeamish. Both songs are upbeat, fast-paced electronic new wave. They're both very catchy with sing-along vocals, though I am hoping I don't go home singing one side of this tonight. Yet, I know I will. (CK)
(Douchemaster, PO Box 5209, Atlanta, GA 31107, www.douchemasterrecords.com)

LOGIC PROBLEM – "DSM-IV" EP

Blown-out, pissed off, burly hardcore from North Carolina. Epic Warfare from DOUBLE NEGATIVE manned the knobs for the A-side, and these songs have an urgent, raw, and ominous feel, which makes 'em shine as some of the better tunes from the '80s-styled crop of bands. All of the instruments bleed together to make one mean mess of a sound with a healthy dose of feedback holding everything together. The B-side has a brighter, cleaner sound, which is less effective for the style. The songs are still good, but they are more in line with GOVERNMENT WARNING and that ilk and the sound is a bit tame compared to the A-side. The guitar tone on the whole thing is spot-on, with lots of gnarly sounds coming through the mix. Bleak hardcore is the best hardcore and there is not much of a glimmer of hope on this EP. LOGIC PROBLEM, along with DOUBLE NEGATIVE, has raised the bar for the No Way/Grave Mistake/Sorry State cartel, and I'm curious to see what's gonna come next. (CI)
(Sorry State, www.sorrystaterecords.com)

LOU LOU & THE GUITARFISH – CD

As written up not long ago in one of the local free weeklies, an oddball (as one expects from Birdman) kind of psychy but kind of punky/cabaret rock (two SF musical traditions combined at last) band of teens that includes two offspring of Hank Rank of CRIME (the emphasis of the weekly article), including a worldly-beyond-her-years (not old enough to drive) sounding chanteuse. This sort of sophisticated mix is difficult to deal with in standard *MRR* compare-to-other-bands brevity. So, how do kids get so sophisticated these days? Must be the internet. At any rate, children truly are the future, so get used to it, old-timer! (DD)
(Birdman, www.birdmanrecords.com)

LOUT SOCIETY KÜRSE – "Waiting for the Apocalypse" LP

One look at the cover here and you'll know what you're in for: early-'90s-style crustcore! Yes, that is a term I used to use quite frequently, and if you listen to these French folks do their thing you will remember! HIATUS, EXTREME NOISE TERROR, DOOM, EXCREMENT OF WAR, NAUSEA… it's all in there. Awesome band that is entirely new to me; a very cool surprise on a multi-label project! (NM)
(I Feel Good, www.jbhs.propagande.org)

LOVER! – "Man in the Woods" EP

New project from former member of LOST SOUNDS, VIVA L'AMERICAN DEATH RAY, KNAUGHTY KNIGHTS, and THE REATARDS. These two tunes are pure pop and quite unlike the previous bands from Mr. Crook. The A-side is a simple pop rock song and the B-side is acoustic-based with strange sounds to give it a little substance. I'm not personally a big fan of generic-sounding pop songs, but this damn single is already stuck in my head. Damn. (MU)
(Rob's House, www.robshouserecords.com)

LOVER! – "No More Reasons/All Alone"

Prolific as hell and yet to make a false move, Rich Crook's LOVER! has taken its spot near the top of the catchy, fuzzy punk heap. The songs are coated in a fair amount of gunk here, yet the infectiousness shines through it all. You'll play both sides over and over. (MC)
(HoZac, www.myspace.com/horizontalaction)

THE MAHONIES – "Hey We Got Coney! It's Great! Let's Dig In!" EP

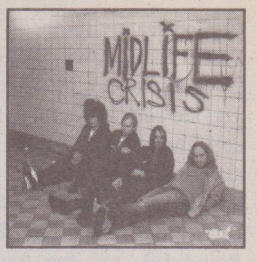
Eight-song 7" filled with odd, speedy, artful, dumb bursts that are impossible to shake after multiple spins. The kind of record that was tossed off in a single afternoon, yet will reverberate with punk record nerds several years after the fact. "Things Are Getting Foggy," with foghorn-ish backing vocals, is worth the price of admission alone. DIY can be totally fucking fun. X! Records wins…again. (MC)
(X!, www.x-recs.com)

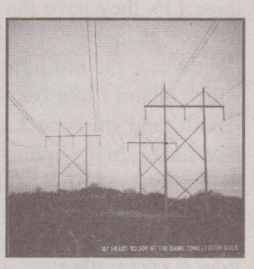
MAMMOTH GRINDER – "Rage and Ruin" LP

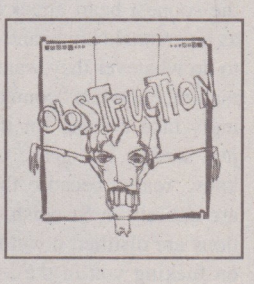
MAMMOTH GRINDER is raw fucking digs! Way into this record right now, a ripping seven-song 12". This Austin three-piece (!) creates a really fluid record that not only blends well from song to song, with an epic pummeling sound, but styles too. From HC flurry to southern metal (a la SOILENT GREEN, if only for a brief moment) to thick riffs and atmosphere in the music, and then back to killer pissed-ness! Great record! I've had little time for much else since getting ahold of it! The change in pace on the beginning of the B-side does take away the from the LP as a whole, but considering the "Dead Rednecks/God Is Stuck in a Black Hole" mash-up is total sludge and the other five are face-smashers, the tune shows the diversity and awesomeness these guys have going for them. (RM)
($12 ppd to: Depleted Resource, 1003 Justin Ln. Apt 2093, Austin, TX 78757, www.myspace.com/depletedresource)

MAN IS THE BASTARD – "Sum of the Men 'The Brutality Continues'" CD

One of my biggest regrets in life is that I didn't have my friends pick me up early from school when MAN IS THE BASTARD played at Fort Thunder in Providence, regardless of my mom saying I couldn't go. MITB was one of the most original and crushing bands that ever reared its ugly head in punkdom. Ever! I'm sure you've seen their signature "skulls" one place or another (it appears 29 times in the layout of this CD). For those unfamiliar, this band of aliens created some of *the* most brutish racket by putting the dual bass guitars as the focal point of their music and pushing the guitar into the nether regions of the songs, and often adding power electronics to their tunes to really throw a wrench in the works of what was currently going on in the hardcore punk scenes at the time (1991-1997). Caveman-core to the max and truly of a different breed. Maybe you've heard the term "powerviolence"? Well, it







first appeared in the MITB song "Hispanic Small Man Power (H.S.M.P.)." That should give you another indication of what to expect if you are *still* wondering. This disc is the newest collection of MAN IS THE BASTARD material to hit the streets, and contained on this one are the *Sum of the Men* LP, their side of the split LP with BLEEDING RECTUM, *Our Earth's Blood* EP, and the tracks from the BORN AGAINST and SINKING BODY splits. These records are long out of print, so, if you ain't got 'em, this is a great compilation. (JU)
(Deep Six, PO Box 6911, Burbank, CA 91510, www.deepsixrecords.com)

MARKED MEN – LP

After years of being out of print and impossible to find, Dirtnap Records has finally re-released MARKED MEN's first LP, originally released on Rip Off Records. This is a fucking amazing album from start to finish. Through the three LPs they have put out, MARKED MEN haven't changed a bit. Each album picks up right where the last left off. I can never decide which album I like best—it will change by the month, and this one has frequently been my pick for #1. In my opinion, MARKED MEN are the best garage band of this decade, and one of the best live bands. Super catchy high-energy rock 'n' roll. For fans of JAY REATARD or TOYS THAT KILL. I couldn't recommend any album in this review section more highly. These songs will literally be dancing in your head for days after you've listened to the album. Fucking awesome! (FS)
(Dirtnap, 2615 SE Clinton St, Portland, OR 97202, www.dirtnaprecs.com)

MASSGRAV – "This War Will Be Won by Meat Eaters" CD

There's no explanation to the title, making me wonder which war? The one to get the most clogged arteries? The one to reach obesity and the soonest heart attack? I view vegetarianism as a personal choice and respect people's rights to do whatever they want once they have information, but when "counterculture" punks seemingly take a stand for the dominant culture, I just scratch my head. Guess I don't want to know, really, because the lyrics to this record are entirely in Swedish, and then the explanations are distilled down to, "and they just keep on fucking you in the ass" or "the title says it all—I fucking hate you!" or "let's face it—*your* life sucks and it ain't gonna get better" along with critiques of phony PC punks, Swedish government, adult responsibilities, and so on. Still I wonder though, as the band photos have at least one member with the huge bushy beard and short-cropped hair that is seemingly reserved exclusively stateside for vegans!! WTF? You're flying the "*vegan beard*"!! So maybe it's a huge misinterpretation on my part or an impressive new level of self-loathing. The 27 tracks are on- or above-par for MASSGRAV, with excellent quick snippets of over-the-top, throttling hardcore—some of the world's best being produced in this style right now, with lighting quick vocals, drums, guitars, everything. An awesome, torrential musical blender of overwhelming anger and raging thrash in minute or less bursts. *Kills*. (KS)
(Sound Pollution, PO Box 17742, Covington, KY 41017, www.sound-pollution.com)

MENTALLY CHALLENGED – "Doctors, Lawyers, Cops and Priests" EP

This is really a hard record to write about. It reminds me of early-'90s hardcore, but filtered through the more fucked up sounds of early-'80s harDCore, maybe like a less emotional HEROIN or less drugged-up UNITED MUTATION. It has a really damaged, murky feel. The recording is intentionally destroyed-sounding, which detracts from the heaviness of it but makes it one of the more interesting and compelling records I have listened to this year. I think I have played it ten times so far—as soon as I heard it I ordered it and a tape, too. Apparently there was an earlier 7" that sold out instantly, which I need to get a hold of also. Seriously, get this if you like good hardcore that references sound ideas that haven't been over-exploited by tired generic thrasher types... It looks as cool and mysterious as the music, with this pummeling, doomed energy that brings to mind RORSCHACH, but somehow more disgusted and chaotic than enraged. More people need to start hardcore bands that are as interesting conceptually as this one. Like I said, this was a hard record to write about. (LG)
(no label info, try www.painkillerrecords.com)

THE METAL TEETH – "Wild Eyes" EP

This is pretty cool, but limited to a few hundred copies so you probably won't be able to get this unless you live in the band's hometown of Kalamazoo, MI. If you do live there, I recommend picking up this nifty EP, and if you do not, always look at the bright side of things and be happy you don't live in Kalamazoo. This band is their teens and plays catchy, weird, lo-fi garage punk. The first song is called "CS 36 F7G" and those are the entire lyrics of the song! Fab! The second song on the A-side has a great hook for the chorus, which also happens to be the name of the song: "Teevee Steeled My Brane." The B-side starts off with a song that reminds me of early CRAMPS stuff. The finale might be the weirdest song on the EP. The chorus sounds like the same used by the STOOGES in "I Wanna Be Your Dog," yet at the same time somehow sounds absolutely nothing like the song. (MU)
(UFO Dictator, PO Box 19083, Kalamazoo, MI 49019, www.ufodictator.com)

MENTHOLS – "Miracle Slips/Rats and Insects"

This one's a bit too arty to be simply labeled as garage rock. Then I'd also have a hard time lazily calling it post-punk. But that is what's so great about it. Both songs are driving, guitar-led compositions, but then the rhythms go a bit off kilter, creating a kind of musical lopsidedness. Then they come back again. It's dizzying, but in the best possible way. There are only certain times when I really like monotonous, lackluster vocals. This is one of them. The singer (or is it singers?) sounds kind of bored, but he manages to project it in a captivating way. This record is too cool. (CK)
(UFO Dictator, PO Box 19083, Kalamazoo, MI 49019, www.ufodictator.com)

MICHEL PLATINIUM – "Intenta Comprender un Poca" EP

This surprised me. From the band name to the artwork, I was not expecting what I heard when I dropped the needle—grindcore meets fast hardcore with fiercely political lyrics. This seems to be MICHEL PLATINUM's first release other than a demo. Lyrics in French with English and Spanish translations included. The songs are short, fast and loud—the way we like it. This EP was refreshing for a lot of reasons. I couldn't find much info on the band. I couldn't figure out who is in it or decide if they were fastcore, powerviolence or grindcore, and Googling them turned up very little info. What I heard is what counts, and I liked it. (MH)
(I Feel Good, www.jbhs.propagande.org)

MIDLIFE CRISIS – "Cranked Up Really High" EP

An all-covers EP by these '70s-loving Swedes. SLAUGHTER AND THE DOGS, PF COMMANDO, THE OUTSIDERS, and THE MENACE all get some righteous homage. Usually I would cringe at an all-covers affair, but with the abundant energy, swagger, and attitude that these eye-lined hairbears impose, I can't help but be won over. Hopefully next time I'll get to sample a big dirty helping of their own material. (SD)
(Bootleg Booze, www.bootlegbooze.com)

MOHO – "Chotacabra" LP

Eight tracks of lumbering, heavily distorted sludge-core from Spain, akin to Holland's GORE in instrumental bashing, though here throaty vocals occasionally gurgle to the surface. You can feel the reverb of the amps as this ball of heavy distortion churns along, though it's the pounding "drummer's drumming" (i.e. flashy drumming that's great, but maybe most appreciated by other drummers) that hauls this beast forward. Fans of CORRUPTED, or the darker corners of stoner rock, don't miss. Packed into an almost head-scratchingly bleak

gatefold. (KS)
(Alone, PO Box 4158, 29013 Malaga, SPAIN)

THE MOJOMATICS – "Don't Pretend that You Know Me" CD

THE MOJOMATICS are a two-piece band from Venice, Italy. Jangly nouveau garage rock that is very high energy and extremely polished. It's fun, toe-tapping music that I am sure will be so much better late at night when I have had a few too many beers. (CK)
(Ghost, www.ghostrecords.it)

MOTHER SPEED / RETARD STRENGTH – split EP

This is joint release by MOTHER SPEED from Redlands, CA and RETARD STRENGTH of Philly. The MOTHER SPEED side is two songs of party thrash that I imagine are all about playing video games and drinking beer (no lyrics are printed). They then end their side with two adequately done CIRCLE JERKS covers. The RETARD STRENGTH side is definitely the weaker of the two. Poor production and even poorer lyrics that display just the lowest common denominator, but I'm assuming that's what they are going for. (PL)
(Party Time, www.myspace.com/partytimerecords)

MUKEKA DI RATO – "Carne" CD

Thirteen or so years running (!) makes MUKEKA DI RATO one of the elder statesmen of the current Brazilian scene, and as always they make a good representation of the wild high energy that marks why Brazil has some of the most exciting hardcore coming out right now. The second track on this ("Animal") is almost blinding in its speed. While not marked with the gutteral vocals of classic Brazilian hardcore or its later metallic singe, the fourteen tracks here are expertly recorded and played—super high-energy thrashing balanced with melodic tracks, bridges, and choruses almost akin, at times, to something that would float by on "modern rock" radio. At other times it's capped with great raw, shouted vocals and as their trademark sound, a fearless ability to throw in some FUGAZI-style dub, hip-hop inspired parts, and then bust back into rampaging thrash. Another solid and varied attack with lyrics that are entirely in Portuguese. (KS)
(Deckdisc, www.mukekadirato,com.br)

MY HEART TO JOY AT THE SAME TONE – "Virgin Sails" EP

Before I even hit play, I'd like to say: fully fuck the name of this band. I'm sure it's a reference to something stupid that I just don't understand, but really? MY HEART TO JOY AT THE SAME TONE? *Really*?? I've lost my reference points for these kinds of bands, but oddly enough I still like it. It reminds me of what emo was before it meant goth kid cutters and was an actual punk subgenre, when "emo" bands like MINERAL and THE GET UP KIDS were playing a sound that would eventually become the indie rock norm and real emo bands like SHOTMAKER would play alongside shit like BEHEAD THE PROPHET, IN/HUMANITY and SUPPRESSION. But I digress. The B-side track, "All of Life Is Coming Home," is the, ahem, "standout" here, sounding like post-*30 Degrees Everywhere* with the, ahem again, "edge" of the first I HATE MYSELF 12" and a whole lot of early-PIEBALD if Travis sounded more like Blake Schwartzenbach. I suggest only listening to this record if you've got backpack straps to wrap your thumbs around as you bob in perfect time with every other backpack-wearing-headband-sportin' dude in the room. Embarrassment? $3. The embarrassment that I feel since I'm actually enjoying it even just for the sake of a nostalgia trip? Priceless. (JU)
(Triumph of Life, 215 Robindale Dr, Berlin, CT 06037, www.tolrecords.com)

MY REVENGE – "Strength Through Nonviolence" CD

This is the band's second release on the CD-only hardcore label Thorp Records. Their over-use of political content of this record turned me off. When every song deals with a different leftist idea, it just gets kind of exhausting. The record opens up with clips of positive stage banter just in case you didn't know that this band is way PC after having song titles like "Gay Marriage is Better than Your Marriage" or "Strength Tthrough Nonviolence." Aside from that, the music doesn't do much to heighten the quality of this record. It's pretty much more of the same boring mediocre hardcore that plagues these modern times. (PL)
(Thorp, PO Box 6786, Toledo, OH 43612, www.thorprecords.com)

NITAD – "Ibland Kan Man Inte Hindera Sig Sjalv" CD

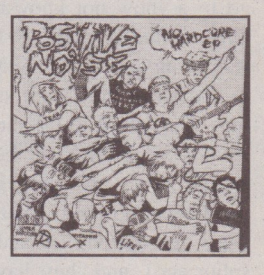
I wasn't too into this one as much as their other stuff. NITAD's full-length debut sounds like a straight FUCKED UP rip-off and less like their previous sound that was more POISON IDEA/MOTÖRHEAD influenced. The artwork looks a lot like something that would be on an ANNIHILATION TIME record. Other than that this record sounds pretty good and they don't do that bad of a job of ripping off FUCKED UP. (PL)
(Kranium, www.krnm.se)

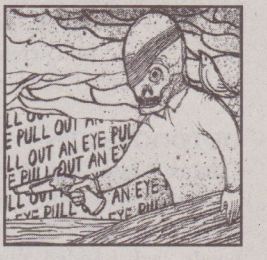
NO HARM DONE – "Escape" CD

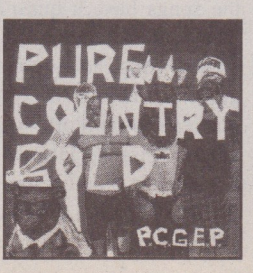
Sweet and melodic hardcore that reminds me of SAMIAM or THE LEFTOVERS mixed with mid-period AFI, but with the dreaded "modern" sound. Can you say SAVES THE DAY? This is not necessarily my cup of coffee, but I do have to say that these mofos hit the nail on the head when it comes to perfecting this type of sugary pop-core that tenuously passes as something relevant for *MRR*. The guitars on this third album are outstanding, and the singer has a great vocal delivery that goes for the heart more than the throat, but aren't there a million of these groups vying to be the *next big thing*? I could see thousands of MySpace and Hot Topic types swooning over these guys, but not too many fans of rock 'n' roll. The lyrics, of course, are personal and introspective, but they're very good for what they are. I have some friends in mind that would totally love this, but they're more likely to buy tickets to the Warped Tour before they pick up an issue of this magazine. Know what I'm saying? (BG)
(Think Fast!, www.thinkfastrecords.com)

OBSTRUCTION – EP

Nothing really grabbed me about this release, other than the unique peach/blended vinyl—don't see that too







much. Straightforward, forgettable punk *rawk*. (RM)
(Lunchbox, 1419 A Central Ave, Charlotte, NC 28205, www.lunchboxrecords.com)

OFF WITH THEIR HEADS – "From the Bottom" LP

Alright! My first review for *MRR* just happens to be one of my current favorite bands! First off, I must say, there was a time when I'd go to a show not knowing who was playing, only to find out OFF WITH THEIR HEADS was going to play. I'll be honest they were pretty bad when they were starting out. If I knew they were playing, I'd show up late so I didn't have to sit through another set. Fast forward a couple years and they got really amazingly good out of nowhere. That was like three or four years ago (or one LP and a gazillion EPs and splits ago), and they have only gotten better since. This record has a lot of new songs and some songs from previous EPs re-recorded and polished up a bit. They are often compared to DILLINGER FOUR or SCREECHING WEASEL or something along those lines. I've never really heard much of a D4 influence—just raw sing-along-fist-in-the-air-get-drunk-and-have-a-good-time pop punk. Hell, you can even hear a slight touch of street punk in some of these songs. I haven't been fortunate enough to see these guys since moving from Minneapolis, so you can bet I'm pumped for the few shows they'll be playing in the Bay Area in the upcoming weeks. (BD)
(No Idea, PO Box 14636, Gainesville, FL 32604, www.noidearecords.com)

OILTANKER – "Happiness" EP

New England crust punk! Connecticut to be exact. OILTANKER is a fairly new band if I am not mistaken, and these guys play some barraging stuff along the lines of DISRUPT, EXTREME NOISE TERROR, and STATE OF FEAR, with some D-beat influence. Real bread-and-butter stuff for the aspiring crusty. (NM)
(Spicy Soup, 74 Dwight St 2nd Floor, New Haven, CT 06511, www.spicysoup.net)

OUTDOORSMEN – "Ain't Got No Chains/When They Bury You Down"

Garage punk with a good dose of the necessary-for-success Ingredient X that too many bands lack. Added plusses: the production sounds suitably cheap but not too skuzzy, and the songs have a quasi-*Back From the Grave* feel without coming off as slavish imitations. Another misleading cover, though the seventh-grader's drawing of Iron Johns (one using a punker's torn off arm to smoke a spliff, another angrily pissing into an apparently delighted debutante's mouth) does have a certain "What the fuck?" value. (DD)
(Wild! American, no address)

PALAVA SURFERS – "Zombie" EP

I'm OK with trad '60s surf from the '60s, or even fucked up garage surf like the PHANTOM SURFERS. But sub-par French surf? Non, merci. (TB)
(Be Fast, www.myspace.com/befastlabel)

THE PITY FUCKS – "Why Right Now" EP

Frat boy lo-fi done with a certain charming cheapness. Like a skinter COCONUT COOLOUTS. Four messy tracks that harken back to the most obscure tracks buried in the *Pebbles* series and all reeking of stale PBR with a hint of sweaty basement. (SD)
(Felony Fidelity, www.felonyfidelity.com)

PLACE HANDS – "Inscribed in Glass" CD

There's nothing worse than a reviewer dropping the old "not my cup of tea" line on a release that is clearly a work of love. I review plenty of poorly produced shite, thanks to Floyd's cloth ears... PLACE HANDS is clearly accomplished, strong musicians, but man, this shit is like nails on a chalkboard. Off kilter emo-rock with its roots squarely in DC, and only the female second vocals pull them away from a total FUGAZI rip-off. This kinda stuff was the reason I could never read *HeartattaCk*... music for sensitive folks with high-water pants and *Winnie the Pooh* patches on their bags. Pass the fucking glue bag... (TB)
(Standard Form, www.myspace.com/placehands)

POSITIVE NOISE – "No Hardcore" EP

Just when you thought all the cool thrash revival bands had disappeared or gone metal, POSITIVE NOISE comes to the rescue. This brings to mind the energy and positive attitude of stuff like early WHAT HAPPENS NEXT? and SCHOLASTIC DETH. There's even the hand-drawn, silk-screened cover of kids in the pit, wearing shirts like LIFE'S HALT and 7 SECONDS. You get the idea of what style this is, but it's way better than what you're probably starting to think. This ain't no second-rate bandana thrash here, so stop rolling your eyes. Hardcore sounds like CHAIN OF STRENGTH and CRIPPLED YOUTH are just as strong an influence as LÄRM and TOTAL FURY. And the lyrics are cool too, because they are simple and optimistic, yet never corny or coming off as generic straight edge sloganeering. The back cover has a nice illustration of some dude getting smashed in the face with a beer bottle. I'd say you need this. (BG)
(Punks Before Profits, PO Box 1148, Grand Rapids, MI 49501, punksbeforeprofits@hotmail.com)

PRIVATE DICKS – "Homelife" LP

Collector scum will be familiar with this band for their inclusion on one of the infamous *Killed By Death* collections, although they would be more at home on the *Powerpearls* series. The band recorded one infamous 7" in the late '70s and disappeared into obscurity... unfairly, judging by the recordings collected here. Super tight mod-tinged power-pop from Bristol, England; BUZZCOCKS and UNDERTONES meets the PURPLE HEARTS. As with most Rave Up releases, there are a couple of dispensable live tracks, but those aside, this is a really strong collection of late-'70s power-pop. (TB)
(Rave Up, Via Crispolti 16 – 00159 Roma, ITALY, www.raveuprecords.com)

PROJECT HOPELESS – "Välkommen till Vår Sopfyllda Fabric" CD

I seriously think I've reviewed all of this long-running band's material for *MRR*. So be it; I can tell you with confidence, *Välkommen till Vår Sopfyllda Fabric* is without a doubt the best PROJECT HOPELESS has ever produced. The music, both scathing and raw, relies on tension and directness, which reflects the politics of the band and is conveyed lyrically with perfection. The addition of Steve (*Attitude Problem* zine) contributing on vocals and spoken word also adds incredible power, and a very peace punk edge to the record. This band is no throwback to the '80s, though. The messages they are touting, as well as the music, are both relevant and brutal. PROJECT HOPELESS has sharp views, and this release brings all the pieces into focus. Really fucking excellent! (WK)
(Not Enough,www.notenough.hardcorepunk.se)

PROLETARIAN ART THREAT – "The Long Process of Quitting" CD

Nice little piece of weird-for-the-sake-of-being-weird man-rage. Driving, raging, art-damaged, chaotic, and falling apart—Cleveland weirdos who take after other Cleveland weirdos. It's pretty all right, even though it does dance on that dumb line of "is it tongue-in-cheek, or actually slightly offensive?" You know, that pathetic dude asshole swagger thing? I like all the chaos and catharsis, really, over the fake weirdo dickhead act. Oh, and way too long, like 25 tracks' worth. (MM)
(Shandi, www.shandirecords.com)

PULL OUT AN EYE – CD

Belarus' PULL OUT AN EYE would fit perfectly on a bill with LIFE'S HALT or WHAT HAPPENS NEXT? circa 2000. This disc blasts on by with a welcome dose of smart, fast, enraged hardcore. The band plays this style straight and true-to-form, but includes enough neat build-ups, breakdowns, and brief forays into melody to keep away from the generic tag. Another asset is the vocalist's energetic and dynamic demeanor, which makes me imagine

an impressive and wild live show. Fortunately, PULL OUT AN EYE avoids any of the wacky antics that often plague this genre in favor of a pissed-the-fuck-off approach. "Hardcore is no fucking joke" is branded at the end of the lyric sheet. Some of the topics attacked are bureaucracy, society, uniforms, gay-bashing, show-offs, nuclear energy, and the current plague of Russian Nazis. It's rare that I find über fast hardcore of this variety to be engaging, but I truly enjoyed the time spent with this disc. (CI)
(self-released, pulloutaneye@gmail.com)

PURE COUNTRY GOLD – "PCGEP" EP

Are these boys aiming for a more rockabilly-influenced (though, mind, not in the comical way that rockabilly flavoring usually comes off) version of the GUN CLUB with a low-fi stab at NEW BOMB TURKS-dom or am I just vaporing? If I'm way off, it's probably because I have to use headphones here at *MRR* HQ, which makes their single-channel schtick kind of distracting (I've tried to quickly alternating the workings). (DD)
(Green Noise, 2615 SE Clinton St, Portland, OR 97202, www.greennoiserecords.com)

RAY – "All as One" CD

No way! I never realized that the total mid-'90s influenced melodic posi-core had crept its ugly head as far out as Russia. I guess a lot of things have changed in that country since punk used to be super underground and dangerous to one's health back in the '80s. According to the pictures of the crowds on this album, it looks like they have a pretty damn vibrant scene right now. And even though I'm not a huge fan of clean-sounding hardcore full of sing-along background choruses and such, I have to say that this freakin' towers over the majority of US and Euro bands I hear from this same genre. RAY throws down a ton of guitar breakdowns and fast verses, excellent drumming, catchy melodies, and inspiring lyrics that fall along the personal side of things. English translations are considerately included with the booklet that comes along. If you like bands like STAY GOLD, or Bridge Nine and Indecision Records, without a doubt this is worth looking into. (BG)
(Old Skool Kids, PO Box 64, 109147 Moscow, RUSSIA. www.myspace.com/oskrecords)

REPROBRATES – "Stress" EP

Noisy, chaotic tracks delivered by this Toronto outfit. Killer songwriting makes REPROBATES stand out from the crowd—"Rat Maze," "Gone to Shit," and "Failure" all have some awesome guitar playing. Rapid-fire punk/hardcore. Grit your teeth, clench your fist, and go nuts! This record rules! (MS)
(No Way, www.nowayrecords.com)

SCAPHISTS – "Clean Latrines" EP

SCAPHISTS seems to be coming from the purposely annoying and whiny school of punk, and they are very adept at accomplishing their goals. The guitar has this processed, crappy metal sound that doesn't fit the rest of their minimalist aesthetic and the vocals are simply awful. These songs have no hooks to latch onto and the attempts at cleverness lack any sort of bite. I think SCAPHISTS is going for that downplayed, art punk thing, but they end up coming off like one of those bands that sort of fills the air and doesn't fit anywhere. They're just boring and *annoying*. (CI)
(Scaphism, www.myspace.com/scaphists)

SELMANAIRES – "Just To Get Your Love/Verdigris Intrigue"

Tremendous new school power-pop out of Atlanta (which appears to be the new hotbed of punk rock). A dash of GENTLEMEN JESSE and JAY REATARD on the A-side, but way more sugary '60s pop on the B-side. Not sure if these cats are down with the underground, or looking for the BLACK LIPS hipster angle, but this is a pretty rocking disc nonetheless. (TB)
(International Hits, www.internationalahits.com)

THE SHINING / WAKING THE DEAD – split LP

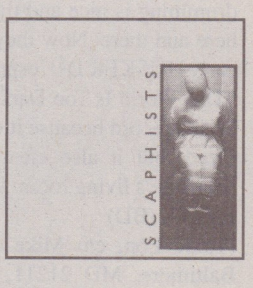
Split LP by two Dutch thrash-mongers. Both bands play a somewhat similar variety of thrash that is split between punk and metal, and certainly brings to mind some '80s Bay Area greats as well as Scandinavian and Dutch punk thrashers. The lyrics are cynical, nihilistic, and angry, which suits the music quite well. Incredible cover art, too! Sign me up. (NM)
(Dead Area, postmaster@skateordiemotherfucker.nl)

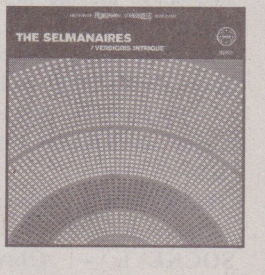
SICK MORMONS – "Taekwando" EP

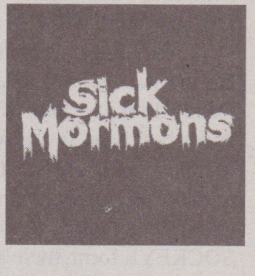
Yes sir! THE SICK MORMONS from Amsterdam bring their trashed-out Los Angeles-style punk rock to you! This snotty music is steeped in the bile that swirled around the City of Angels when TSOL and the ADOLESCENTS held court in 1983. THE SICK MORMONS plow through "Taekwando," "Kobayashi," "Sukiyaki," and "War." Every song is a keeper!! Yes! This is highly-objectionable punk rock for bad people! (BR)
(Gummopunx, m.schilpzang@chello.nl)

SLANG – "The Immortal Sin" CD

Marking their 20-year anniversary, SLANG has released their fourth album onto the world. Founding member KO, head of Sapporo, Japan's Straight Up Records, takes on the vocal duties this time around. SLANG mixes up a bunch of different influences on *The Immortal Sin* and creates their own monster. It sounds very distinctly Japanese, especially in the guitar riffs and the vocal inflection, but there are also elements of later period NYHC and newer heavy Swedish bands like WOLFBRIGADE. What makes this really stand out to me is the parts that are slowed down for a moment and then kicked back to full throttle before it gets boring. The lyrics, which are sung in Japanese but translated into English, deal with war, authoritarianism, and the genocide that is being carried out on a daily basis by our world leaders. Three of the ten tracks on this album were released as A-sides to three singles that came out recently on H:G FACT, MCR, and Bloodsucker Records. There is also an LP version of *The Immortal Sin* available from Schizophrenic. The CD comes with bonus tracks of NEGATIVE APPROACH, KURO, RATOS DE PORÃO, and RIPCORD covers. This is definitely the most powerful SLANG record to date. (SE)
(Schizophrenic, www.schizophrenicrex.com)







SLEEPWALL – "Come in From the Cold" EP

Being a normal person, I started this record on side A. The first thing that came to mind was REPLACEMENTS-style rock—like the early stuff mixed with the later stuff, if that makes sense. I don't know if it's the guitar riffage, the vocals, or maybe just the whole thing all at once. Flip it over and side two is similar, but the songs get faster and maybe a little darker. The drumming is nice and tight, with some rad fills here and there. Now they're sounding a bit like early HÜSKER DÜ, especially the second song, "This World Is Too Dark." I like the production of this record because it doesn't sound homogenized, but it also clearly wasn't recorded in someone's living room. Definitely worth checking out. (BD)

(Toxic Pop, c/o Mike Riley, 2981 Falls Rd, Baltimore, MD 21211, www.toxicpoprecords.com)

SMITH WESTERNS – "Irukandji" EP

From the shamble-istic, herky-jerky school of garage punk (though the awful cover had me fearing I was in store for some wanking neo-psych) and pretty decent. Though judging from the reviews on their MySpace page, I seem to be in a distinct minority for thinking so (maybe they only reproduce the negative reviews—always a good way to show one's disdain for asshole critics such as yours truly). The two A-side songs are the highlight, while "Spiritus Sanctus" plods a bit too much to too little purpose. The skuzzy recording style only works intermittently for them. I'd suggest mixing it up a bit next time, as well as throwing a few more curves into the songs. Could be a band to watch. (DD)

(HoZac, www.myspace.com/horizontalaction)

SOCKEYE – "Obscure Rare Limited Unreleased Underground Subversive Minotaur Tits AKA Return of the Nacho Ostomy Bags" CD

A few things all children should be told: 1. He/she was adopted, even if he/she was not. 2. Daddy drinks because of him/her. 3. SOCKEYE is the best band in the world. SOCKEYE were retarded, mentally stunted, idiotic gimps with guitars that poorly recorded hundreds of songs; this CD collects 48 tracks of them. In true SOCKEYE form, there's little information as to when these tracks were recorded, where, who played what…even the title I'm using above is really just words scrawled across the front of the cover. The lyric sheet, which reads like a shopping list written by a Vietnam vet in the midst of a twelve-day LSD nightmare, offers that these songs were recorded at various times during SOCKEYE's illustrious career, spanning from 1988 to 1998. Folks, SOCKYE is the king of 'tardcore. Just pure brilliance, sounding equally like ALICE DONUT, WEEN, MOSS ICON, and BLACK SABBATH. Lots of covers on this one—favorites include a live, twangy, country-esque "Do They Owe Us a Living?" that speeds up to hardcore, a surprisingly close-to-form "Depression," and "Devil Inside," which was originally performed by INXS. This easily blows away any other release I reviewed this month. (VL)

($5ppd to: Not Very Nice, PO Box 2, Bloomfield Hills, MI 48303)

SPEED SPEED SPEED – "Crimes Against Melody" CD

With a cover that looks like it was ripped out of *Verotik* comic—some goat demon beast holding up a band logo while nubile succubi with bat-wings flutter around it—what this sounds like could be anyone's guess. It's actually solid and very well played DRIVE LIKE JEHU-ish rock punk with the similar musical twists and time changes. Where the album title and music hit synchronicity is in the kind of laryngitis strained ROD STEWART vocals over the entire record. The kind of vocals that aren't sung well and aren't screamed well, but largely remain abrasively consistent in the red the whole time, while never reaching parity with the diverse, quiet, and varied tempos and changes in the music. Ironically, the vocals are what never sold me 100% on JEHU, but these vocals are a thick coat of black paint over otherwise solid compositions. No lyrics, but with song titles such as "Pirates Versus Robots" and "Flight of the Monarch," I guess it doesn't matter. (KS)

(self-released,www.myspace.com/speedspeedspeed)

THE SPOILS – "To the Victor" LP

Six tracks of repetitive, mid-tempo hardcore from Boston, with thick, hard rock guitar riffing and snarled vocals in a basic, raw practice-space-style recording. Simplistic punk lyrics about cops, war, and work from "ex-members of SIEGE"—but it's actually more similar in attack to their post-SIEGE project NIGHTSTICK in slower, plodding metallic dirge. Even when you try speeding the record up to 45 RPM, no…it's still clunky punk-ish rock, with not enough groove, catchy riffs, or demented brutality to work at this slow tempo. There's still some neat musical ideas and quirks (the dynamic drumming of, say, "Pigs Suck," and its offbeat charge—before the whole song goes all nü-metal and, uh, funky), but largely the longish, rock-ish compositions work as a detriment to the whole picture. Even without changing the tempo, these songs could be distilled to a quarter of the length, resulting in an impact that would be far less tedious and far more interesting. (KS)

(Deep Six, PO Box 6911, Burbank, CA 91510, www.deepsixrecords.com)

STRUGGLE FOR PRIDE – "Change the Mood/Movie Scenes"

I'm gonna admit I never gave this Japanese band a shot as I assumed they'd be some generi-thrash-posi-gunk due to the name. Boy, I couldn't have been more off the mark. The A-side, "Change the Mood," is an instro-dose of MAN IS THE BASTARD-bass-heavy-cum-CONFUSE wall of headache-y noise that has more in common with, say, RRRecords than anything from the punk scene. On the flip, it's just as noisy, demented, and head-fucked, but barely audible vocals are added to sway things more to the distort-o-rama frenzy of your typical Japanese noise-core lords like the aforementioned CONFUSE, CARAVANA ANARQUISTA, GLOOM, etc. If you're the kind of head that can hang with ATROCIOUS MADNESS *and* the white noise stylings of the Hanson Records/Hospital Productions/Aryan Asshole camp, you should for sure check this out. (JU)

(Answer, Hase Bld, No 2 B1, 5-49 OSU 3, Naka-ku, Nagoya-city, Aichi 460, JAPAN, www.recordshopanswer.com)

SURPRISE SEX ATTACK – "…A Romantic Interlude" CD

So, wait…these guys basically found a (not so) clever way to call themselves rapists? I dunno, I can't get over how dumb the name is. In any event, this bunch of confused perverts found a way to get their CD into my hands and honestly, it ain't so bad. Heavy nods to oldies but goodies like GBH and THE EXPLOITED without straight aping their sound. Mohawks and leather abound, and these Western Australians put together a decent showing. They'd be right at home on Punk-Core reppin' the classic sound with good leads. (RM)

(Live Fast Die Drunk, livefastdiedrunk@yahoo.com.au)

THE TEMPLARS – "Pure Brickwall Recordings" LP

OK, I'll admit it—I used my powers of suggestion during the assigning process to end up with this for review. With the exception of originators THE 4-SKINS (with Hodges) and THE LAST RESORT, THE TEMPLARS are undoubtedly the greatest band in the "Brickwall Oi" genre. They've got an unparalleled ability to pen songs that are simultaneously tough-as-nails and catchier than the flu, and can also drop mellower, ballad-esque tracks onto their records without blinking an eye. This limited-edition LP features early four-track demos recorded in 1992 and 1993. Rougher, slightly slower versions of some of their best songs are to be found—"Something's Wrong," "The City," "The Templars" (here titled "Young Warrior"), "Police Informer," "The Waiting's Over"—along with a bunch I didn't immediately recog-

nize. Obviously the production's not as good as their studio material, but it's definitely worthy of being pressed to vinyl. I wouldn't recommend this to someone who's never heard the band before (the *Dans le Catacombs du Studio de l'Acre* or *The Return of Jacques de Molay* LPs are better starting points), but it's a must-have for experienced skins and herberts across the land. (CS)
(When Typhoid Courtney Drops, 916 S. 16th St, Mount Vernon, WA 98274)

TERRIBLES – "In Congrefs" CD

This is a weird kind of album. TERRIBLES is a rock 'n' roll band that at times dabbles in some musical stylings that could be considered punk, but for the most part they take a lot of influence from WEEN, both in their music and theatricality. They certainly don't have the oddball humor that characterizes WEEN, I think, 'cause their songs, CD packaging, and insert depict the band as though they are from 18th century colonial America. The insert claimed this was the fifth TERRIBLES full-length, so I looked for more information on the internet to decipher if *In Congrefs* was a concept album or just their shtick, but I honestly couldn't find a damn thing, and the CD didn't list any way to get in touch with them either. I guess this goes along with their theme, 'cause there wasn't no websites 250 years ago. (FS)
(self-released, no address)

THAT'S MY DAUGHTER – "It Takes Tuna Tango" CD

Shades of 1992 here. Sloppy punk-y pop with lots of gal vocals a la TIGER TRAP and CUB. This is decent and fueled by amateur-ish charm. This is *not* pop punk with girl vocals, and as long as this band is still learning how to play they are OK in my book. (RL)
($10 ppd: self-released, 3833A Potomac St, St. Louis, MO 63116)

THOSE FURIOUS FLAMES – "Hot Hot Baby Rock" CD

I got this CD for review because I happened to walk in when Floyd was assigning CDs and had a shitfit about how mainstream crap like this should just be straight-up rejected by the magazine. The inside of the cover and the one-sheet is very explicit about who sponsors this group of generic, post-TURBONEGRO Swiss mall punks, which is what irritates me about this. If a band is sponsored by Vans they do not need *MRR* to review their fuckin' record! This is shitty bar rock with no ideological or musical connection to DIY punk music. Picture a bunch of Warped Tour mutant doomfucks posed in their booty-assed Euro leather jackets and fedoras, including a white dude with a nasty looking jheri curl. This is fucking bogus rockarolla. (LG)
(808, www.808records.ch)

TRUSTY – "Demo" CD

I had a vague recollection of TRUSTY from their '90s post-emo indie-rock years on Dischord, but they actually started as a hardcore band. With this CD, their eleven-song cassette demo from those hardcore years (1989, actually) finally sees proper release. The music is heavily influenced by DC bands like MINOR THREAT and SCREAM, but with some late-'80s wackiness that's not a million miles away from the likes of SONS OF ISHMAEL. The first song on the demo, "Mister Know-It-All," is extremely familiar to me: either some band covered it (the internet has been no help here) or I heard the track on John Peel (fairly likely). This demo is raging, but let's face it: in 1989 the writing was on the wall for this kind of early-'80s hardcore. With metallic moshcore on one side and FUGAZI clones on the other, what's a band like TRUSTY to do? Well, in actuality they packed up and moved from Little Rock, Arkansas to Washington DC, eventually becoming the first non-DC band to sign to Dischord. Hang on, I wonder if they ever shared bills with ECONOCHRIST before Ben & Co. made their way westward? Do all bands from Little Rock have to leave? (AM)
(DC-Jam, 2733 E. Battlefield Rd #164, Springfield, MO 65804, www.dcjamrecords.com)

TURBONEGRA – "L'Ass Cobra" CD

An all lady TURBONEGRO tribute band, for those inclined to like denim, leather, ass, Jagermiester, and raging... Oh yeah, and real good pizza, apparently. If you are a Turbojugend member, you'll be into this. If not, it might leave you saying "meh." (AA)
(Wolverine, www.wolverine-records.de)

VERA FANG – "Consumption" EP

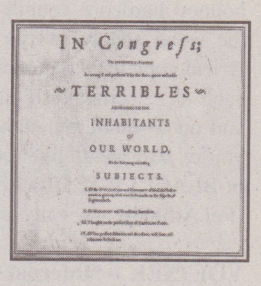
I dig it. Driving art-punk that is pretty dark, too. All the lyrics tend to blend imaginary stories with feminist and anti-racist ideals. The lead girl's voice kind of reminds me of BAD NEWS BATS. Actually, it's all reminiscent of BAD NEW BATS, except this is way more doom-y and serious. It's like post-punk with a heavy grunge and metal influence. The bass sound is all repetitive mega-overdriven lines, the guitar squeals in and out, the drums never heavily fall into disco punk but kinda drive right below that constantly, and the singer never flips out but is definitely thinking about flip-out-type things. I'll definitely catch them when they come through. (MM)
(Army of Bad Luck, myspace.com/armyofbadluck)

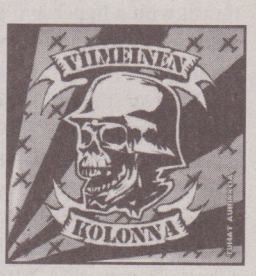
THE VETERANS – CD

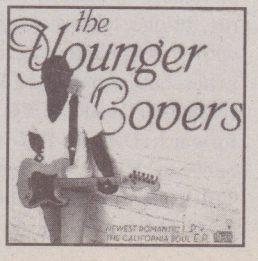
On first look, I really wanted to like this CD. The cover is that awesome mug shot of Nick Nolte from a few years back. You know, the one where he looks like a crazy drunk who just rolled out of the gutter? Plus, on It's Alive Records, who have put out a lot of good releases, as I recall. When I listen to this, it's not bad, but isn't anything special. THE VETERANS are a lot like a more bubblegum-type QUEERS, or maybe THE LILLINGTONS—songs about surfing, surfboards, the ocean, and UFOs. I bet these folks really like the BEACH BOYS and going surfing. Don't get me wrong—there are a couple of good songs here, it's just not as solid as I'd like. (BD)
(It's Alive, 11411 Hewes St, Orange, CA 92869, www.itsaliverecords.com)

VIIMEINEN KOLONNA – "Tuhat Aurinkoa" EP

VIIMEINEN KOLONNA spews a relentless set of classic Finnish hardcore on their latest, recalling MELAKKA on many tracks, but retaining their unique sound, which still feels like it's right out of '84. I liked how they were able to retain basic production values to add an edge of garage-y distortion to most tracks. "Ei Paluuta" stands







out somewhat as a veritable rain of hardcore noise, but even though the lyrics are fairly standard, the music holds its own. Recommended. (SS)
(Hardcore Holocaust, www.hcholocaust.com)

VILE STYLE – "Mad Times!!! At Van Isle High" EP

VILE STYLE is a band out of Victoria, BC that plays a style of hardcore similar to the bouncy hardcore sounds of MADBALL with the vocal and lyric style of WARZONE. The lyrical content of their songs deal with subjects such as rejecting fashion, maintaining a clean and open mind, and standing by your crew. If you're into bands like DOWN TO NOTHING or BLACKLISTED, check this record out. (PL)
(Eel Attitude, www.myspace.com/xvilestylex)

VÖETSEK – "Infernal Command" LP

The assigning crew must be slipping, because no matter which way you slice this one, it's metal. The cover looks like they stole it from KREATOR, with zombies doing their zombie thing among purple-ified ruins and a messianic cult figure shrouded in white beckoning you to do the zombie thing as well. It has metal production, metal lettering, and long, metal hair… so, yeah, it's *metal*. Anyway, VÖETSEK is made up of punks who are playing metal, so I'll play nice and review it. Locals hearkening back to the late '80s of Bay Area thrash with a hyper and high-pitched vocalist. I dare you to try and follow along with her while reading the lyrics. The guitar parts are ridiculously over the top, the drums are fast and remind me of VIO-LENCE—you know, another Bay Area metal band… Fuck it, you know you're going to buy it so stop reading this and contact the label right away so you can get a cool, gold-swirled copy like mine. (VL)
(Tank Crimes, PO Box 3495, Oakland, CA 94609, www.tankcrimes.com)

WARVICTIMS – "Lognen om Fredsavtalet" CD

This starts out heavy and I'm sitting here thinking, "Fuck yeah, this shit's going to rule." And it does…for a while. Everything about this album is just *pretty* good…OK. Something seems to be missing. There's the format—D-beat bands shouldn't release CDs. Unless it's a collection, stick to vinyl or cassette! Seriously, the music is great, but after a while I felt it was incredibly formulaic: verse, chorus, verse, chorus, bridge, chorus…*repeat*. Every once in a while I get pulled in again and think it's getting better, but I would then lose interest again pretty quickly. WARVICTIMS plays very straightforward D-beat HC that lies somewhere between VICTIMS and EXTREME NOISE TERROR, but while those bands write really great and heavy songs, WARVICTIMS is just missing something. I'm going to go with *pretty* good on this one, but it just seems tired. (VL)
(Black Seeds, blacxseeds@yahoo.co.uk)

THE WEDNESDAY NIGHT HEROES – LP

This is some by-the-numbers street punk. I was really into this kinda stuff ten years ago, but I got bored with it pretty quickly. Maybe the whole studded leather jacket, liberty spikes, suspenders, sideburns, and generally over-the-top, flashy aesthetic wasn't for me, or maybe it's that it just all sounds too similar to more than a handful of bands. You really have to impress me to with this kinda stuff. Anyway, this record has a nice full-color layout with a gatefold sleeve and pictures of the band and their friends having some good times and plenty of beer. If you like THE CASUALTIES or OXYMORON, this is totally for you. (BD)
(Longshot, 908 Harrison St, San Francisco, CA 94107, www.longshotmusic.com)

THE YOUNGER LOVERS – "Newest Romantic LP + The California Soul EP" CD

A fun record of punk rock love songs. Lo-fi, simplistic, frenzied, and utterly charming. Brontez sings and plays all instruments. In the hands of someone less charismatic, this could have easily been an embarrassing mess, but in Brontez's capable hands, it is so enjoyable. Plus anyone who has the sense of humor to cover THE RIP-OFFS and THE REPLACEMENTS on the same album is very cool to me. (CK)
(Retard Disco, www.retarddisco.com)

YUPPIE PRICKS – "Balls" CD

This has got to be one of the most disturbing cover photos I have ever seen. No, it's not some gore shot of a body laying on the train tracks or anything, but rather an up-close shot of a sweaty, hairy… uh… *package* that's stuffed into a Speedo! YUPPIE PRICKS is a gag band, so I guess the cover is supposed to be part of the humor, but I initially would have guessed this to be some horrible dive-bar garage rock judging by the cover. Musically, what we have here is a surprisingly good set of mid-tempo, traditional punk rock with lyrics that are mockingly done from the vantage point of rich yuppie douche bags. The songs are pretty hilarious, with titles like "Greed Is Good," "Fuck You, I'm Rich," etc. You get the idea. And the music is better than the average joke band. But I really don't get this phenomenon of lampoon music like JEWDRIVER, JUD JUD, GRUDGE, CRUCIAL YOUTH, YOUTH OF TOGAY, etc. Why spend so much energy on a joke? A single gag can only go on for so long before it becomes redundant. DEAD KENNEDYS used to have songs coming from the third person too, but those were done with a sense of dark, social parody, and they were only part of the mix. Speaking of that group, there's a little bit of a Jello Biafra solo-era influence here, as well as later day CIRCLE JERKS and the BIG BOYS (they do a nice cover of "Frat Cars"). Some of the songs here are really catchy too, especially the BUZZCOCKS-esque "G.O.P." *Balls* is worth a spin if you like a little hilarity and satire with your punk. That is, only if you can get past the cover. I fear the haunting image of that American flag-clad marble bag will follow me to my tomb. (BG)
(Chicken Ranch, PO Box 9909, Austin, TX 78766, www.chickenranchrecords.com)

V/A – "Tunes For Fucker Volume 2" LP

What we have here is the second installment in this Euro-pocket-lining-endeavor series of bootlegs that features raw and rare Japanese hardcore noise from the mid-to-late '80s. First up on this edition is ZOUO's *The Final Agony* 7" from 1984. ZOUO reminds me of GISM with the tortured and demented vocal style and truly evil sounding mid-paced, plodding tracks. You can't go wrong with songs titles like "Sons of Satan" and "Making Love With the Devil." TRANQUILIZER picks up the pace on their first 7" flexi-disc, and doesn't let up till the last note. This is some ugly-sounding Japanese noise-core with some of the most distorted and not-human-not-of-this-earth vocals these ears have heard. Side two starts off with the MANBIKI CHOCOLATE *Manbiki Densetsu Part 1* 8" flexi from 1990. This is the most recent release so far in this series of bootlegs, and the style is indicitive of this particular time period in Japanese hardcore. It reminds me of later-period LIP CREAM stuff with that driving drumbeat, shouted back-ups, and guitar solos that don't sound like the guitar player's fingers were super-glued together. The G-SPOT *Radical & Shout* flexi from 1983 is a mess of sloppy and upbeat punk: It's catchy and tuneful while being out of tune and hard to listen to all at the same time. It makes me feel like I am riding a horse while huffing glue. The record comes with a measly photocopy of the center labels and covers from the original vinyl. You would think that if you were an actual fan of the music and they were taking the time to put together a bootleg that it would come with at least a little info on the bands and maybe a cooler insert rather than a fucking photocopied piece of paper. This particular bootlegger couldn't even be fucked to do some research and figure out when a couple of these records were released. If you are interested at all in Japanese hardcore this is an essential collection of tunes that would literally cost you hundreds of dollars to own—that is if you would be lucky enough to track down the records in the first place. (SE)
(bootleg, no address)

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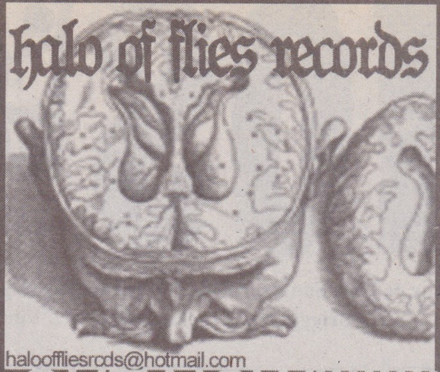

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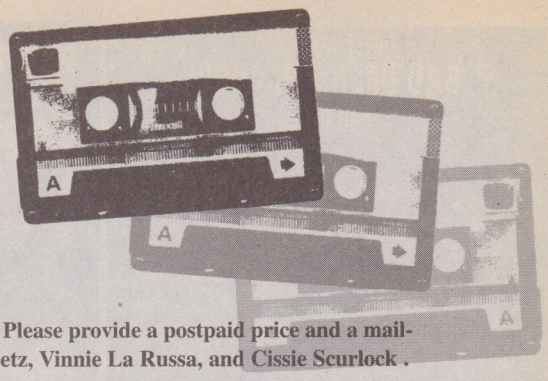

Send demos and CD-Rs to: MRR attn: Demos, PO Box 460760, San Francisco, CA 94146. Please provide a postpaid price and a mailing address with your demo! Reviews by Peter Avery, Justin Briggs, Tim Brooks, Dan Goetz, Vinnie La Russa, and Cissie Scurlock .

ATOM AGE – I love this shit. There is no waiting around for things to kick in, just two minutes of chaos and screaming. It's like MOHINDER but without the emotional part. Frantic drumming and flailing guitars briefly give way to a slow heavy breakdown then one last push and it's over. (Pete) (3-song CD, no lyrics included, violence_puke@yahoo.com)

BIRDFLESH – Novelty/joke recording? *Happy Fun Sumo Sandwich* (the title of this) was supposedly recorded in Japan in 1999, but due to the small crowd and lack of enthusiasm, I'm guessing it was really done at a practice space on a Friday night. With that out of the way, the band plays really fast, really tight HC, power violence-type stuff, a la SPAZZ, et al. The music is great and the guys obviously know how to rip, but it has a whole wackiness element that turned me off. The sound quality is okay, but not really good enough for me. I like live recordings but only of bands that I'm familiar with. If you like MUNICIPAL WASTE or live recordings, check it out. (Vinnie) ($3 ppd, 15-song cassette, no lyrics included. www.birdflesh.net)

CITIZEN GRADE – This was probably my favorite demo of the month. Put it in my truck and listened to it over and over and over again. Really reminded me of WHAT HAPPENS NEXT? and an assortment of other Y2K thrash bands, but the guitarist's clean tone (Fender Strat, maybe?) really distinguished it. The playing is really tight and the songs range from fast to mid-tempo, and the mid-tempo jams greatly flexed their sound—also helped distinguish them. Overall, it sounds like it was recorded on a cheap four-track or hand-held recorder, and after a month of numerous demos with live shows and really slick recordings, this was greatly appreciated. Lyrics are pretty good…these Cannucks are doing it well. I'll watch for their name. (Vinnie) (10-song cassette, lyrics included. www.citizengrade.com)

CROSTA – These Spaniards offer eleven songs of raw, abrasive, basic hardcore punk. CROSTA is coming from a highly political, anarchist bent, with lyrics in Catalan translated into Spanish and French. The music doesn't sound the least bit modern. The minimally distorted guitar bashes out chords and simple catchy guitar lines over primitive drum bashing from the 1-2 and D-beat schools of thought. At times, the playing gets pretty messy and inept, but I like my punk with a dose of non-professionalism, so this is right up my alley. CROSTA has also made some cool artwork for their demo, with a taped-together and spray-painted cover, typewritten lyric sheet, lots of inserts, and a sticker. Another band to watch for from Barcelona. (Cissie)
(11-song tape, lyrics included. PO Box 20030, 08080 Barcelona, SPAIN, medaunespasmo@gmail.com)

DAN SATTERFIELD'S DICK – Lo-fi hardcore punk that I'd reckon was recorded on a boombox. The first song cops a riff from "Hollywood Babylon" and has a rad sloppy organ part in a couple of places. The rest of the demo has a couple of mid-pacers, a couple of faster ones, and also sounds vaguely MISFITS influenced, particularly with an abundance of closed hi-hat and barely audible "whoa ohs," but thankfully without wannabe Danzig crooning. This band's vibe is obnoxious in the right way, and given their locale (which I've actually visited), I'm sure these kids have more reason to be punk than most. (Dan) (5-song CD, no lyrics included, 2214 Beasley Ave, Huntsville, AL 35816)

DER SUBMARINE RACER – Grab your beer and your dancing shoes for these four trashy, sloppy garage rock songs with snotty vocals and awful sound quality. It's a shame about the sound quality because what I can hear behind the crunch of overloaded electronics are catchy, up-tempo, three chord rock songs that actually rock and I can imagine must be witnessed live to truly be appreciated. (Pete) (4-song tape, no lyrics included, 16 1/2 Suffolk St., Cambridge, MA 02139, www.bloodstainrecords.com)

DOTS – Again, It's a shame that the sound quality is so bad on this because the thrashy rock 'n' roll songs are pretty catchy. These six sort of poppy songs are driven by the bass more than the drums, which are really hidden in the mix (luckily the bass lines are really catchy). The songs are completed with fuzzy guitars and snotty vocals leaving you feeling warm and in desperate need of dancing. (Pete) (6-song tape, no lyrics included, 16 1/2 Suffolk St., Cambridge, MA 02139, www.bloodstainrecords.com)

DOWNTOWN RIOTS – It seems young bands these days hardly put any effort into the aesthetics of the demo tape…I guess it's the mp3 culture we live in. Shabby pixilated cover aside this demo is *fantastic*!! I was lucky enough to see these folks in the dark depths of Cornwall, Southern England a couple of months ago and had my head clean blown off. Charging melodic punk rock with hair raising female vocals…sorta like like FIFTH HOUR HERO, but more aggressive and in your face. Someone put out a record!!! (Tim) (3-song CD, no lyrics included, www.myspace.com/downtownriots)

DRY HEAVE – Straight-forward, three-chord punk recorded and played in a way that reminds me of the more punk-sounding of '90s garage punk bands—think LOS HUEVOS LP. I probably gave this five to seven listens and came to the same conclusion every time; the band plays well and music is decent for the style, but the singer is just trying too hard. At times it sounds like he's screaming with so much might that he's not keeping up with the band. Dude: shotgun a beer, take deep breaths, get your cadence down, try again tomorrow. (Vinnie) (5-song cassette, lyrics included. 550 South Jay St., Rome, NY 13440)

THE EXPERIMENTS – Live recording featuring a whole set from these dudes. Full color, laser-printed cover art. They cover "Supermarket Fantasy" by SCREECHING WEASEL (shhh…don't want Foster knocking on the door for royalties!) and this one I've never heard of…"Paint it Black"…? Hmm…must be a new radio song—never heard of it. Straightforward bar rock with some decent guitar noodling. The recording is great for a live recording and I'm trying to think of what these guys sound like…but…I just can't place it. Ahh…maybe a more stripped down, sticking to straight 4/4 drumming SUICIDE COMMANDOS? (Vinnie) (18-song CD, no lyrics included. www.theexperiments.com)

FEMALE SNAKE – This is eleven songs of tuned down, metal-influenced hardcore interspersed with bits of blast beat, guitar mayhem and screaming vocals. The first song is very cool with this heavy start/stop intro. The rest of the tape doesn't really live up to the beginning as the fast parts are too sloppy and the high hats overpower everything else on the recording. (Pete) (11-song tape, no lyrics included, 9241 N. Rancho Verde Dr., Tucson, AZ 85704, femalesnake@gmail.com)

HELLMOUTH – Fast HC with a singer who shouts like Bob from DROP DEAD—though, it's not that fast. Actually, sounds like a cross between PANTERA and DROP DEAD, but maybe less funk melody. Seriously. The production is real slick so it gives it a strong metallic feel that leads me to think also of EXTREME NOISE TERORR. All in all, pretty good, but it sounds like a load of other bands. Inner cover has a female being fucked by demons. *Oooohhh, scary*! (Vinnie) (9-song CD, lyrics included. 666hellmouth@gmail.com)

MORNE – Wow, this is some crushing shit. Good crust bands are few and far between and this here is the best I've heard in eons. It's melodic but doesn't rely on catchy leads like, say, TRAGEDY does. MORNE does have them, but the melody is mostly just inherent in the riffs. So fucking heavy! There are also plenty of keyboards that really help bring out the darkness and mood here. I can't say enough how good this is and if crust is your thing, you won't find anything better than this right now. (Justin)
(7-song cassette or CD, lyrics included. mornecrust@gmail.com, www.myspace.com/mornecrust)

NO CONNECTION – The cover is a parody of Milo Goes to College, though they don't really sound like THE DESCENDENTS at all…more similar to DISCOUNT—yeah, female singer—but she has a nice voice. Most are mid-tempo rockers and I'm thinking there's an element of J CHURCH here, which makes a load of sense considering the previous reference. I like this demo…makes me want to light some candles, stare out the window while it rains, and curl up on the couch with a pint of Chunky Monkey. Friday night in the bag. (Vinnie) (7-song CD, lyrics included. www.myspace.com/noconnection315)

OUT TO SEA – According to the bio that came with this, OUT TO SEA played their first show with DIE YOUNG a week after recording this, have "gained comparisons to" TRIAL AND VERSE and a few others, and are currently shopping this to labels and publications. As for the music, this is mid-paced "modern hardcore" with production to match and with plenty of gang vocals, sung parts I can do without, and melodic leads and riffs that are just on the side of not making me cringe. I'm sure this kind of thing isn't the cup of tea of most *MRR* readers, but it's not horrible, and the above average songwriting keeps it a few steps above generic. (Dan) (6-song CD, lyrics included, out.to.sea.txhc@gmail.com)

PERDITION – Fuck! This is one rippin'-ass tape! I remember not being all that impressed by PERDITION's previous demo, but this one's a ripper! This Queens, NY band has really mastered their craft and do the rip-roaring noisy Scandi-beat thing as good as anyone else running. I really, really, *really* like this and maybe if you're lucky, you can be one of the 150 fortunate *punxes* able to get their paws on this tape. Contained on it is the self-titled EP, an unreleased EP, and practice jams. (Justin)
(10-song cassette, no lyrics included. 48-53 44th St., Queens, NY 11377)

RENEGADES OF PUNK – This Brazilian band plays a very familiar style of fast punk that borders on hardcore. The distortion on the guitar is light and the riffs are often tinged with a more basic garage-y flare that works well here and lands this band somewhere near REGULATIONS or something like that with angry female vocals. This is a really great demo. (Justin)
(9-song CD, lyrics included. www.myspace.com/therenegadesofpunk)

SPOONFUL OF VICODIN / TOTAL FUCKING DESTRUCTION – Released by the same label who did the BIRDFLESH tape reviewed above, this is also a live recording but more recently for SPOONFUL OF VICODIN, 2005, and in the future for TOTAL FUCKING DESTRUCTION, 2023. Go figure. Both bands play a fucking shitload of songs—37 between the two of them—though a few covers are included: EYEHATEGOD and RUIN for TOTAL FUCKING DESTRUCTION and a CROSSED OUT jam for SPOONFUL OF VICODIN. Both bands are similar to those they cover; TOTAL FUCKING DESTRUCTION plays fast HC at times but also turns out some slower tunes a la EYEHATEGOD, and SPOONFUL OF VICODIN is a two-person grind/fast HC unit, very similar to CROSSED OUT. Both are recorded decently and worth checking out if you're interested in grind from the future. (Vinnie) ($4 ppd USA/$7 ppd world, 37-song cassette, no lyrics included. Haunted Hotel Records, PO Box 348, Yonkers, NY 10710)

UNIT SIX – Guitar intro, and I'm so reminded of Ricky Gervais' character, from the far superior UK *The Office*, strumming the opening chords to "Free love on the free love freeway" that I YouTube the episode for comparison and play it for friends and passerby. Song kicks in and the first track mixes current Paul-Westerberg-rockin' with RANCID—the singer is a dead ringer for Lint. Next song is faster and features a different singer. The band alternates between the more mature of the varied Fat Wreck sound and a more roots-rockin' version of RANCID. These guys are good, like, really good. Good musicians, write catchy songs, and slick production for this demo. Would fit in well on Fat Wreck or No Idea or the local Warped tour. (Vinnie) (4-song CD, lyrics included. www.unit six.com)

LA VIRGEN DEL POZO – Huge parts of this tape, including the entire third track, are simply death metal. The punk parts are still metal-inspired, ultra fast, blast beat heavy hardcore with ear piercing screams mixed with deep growling vocals. The songs are very tight, technically proficient and well written. The lyrics, which are in Spanish, are not included but there are helpful, informative English explanations. (5-song tape, no lyrics included, $3 ppd, calle 4, C-5 Parque Montebello, Trujillo Alto, PUERTO RICO 00976, discosdehoy@yahoo.com)

THE VOPOS – The cover of THE MINUTEMEN's "Black Sheep" might give you a clue as of what is to come on this demo. The short hardcore songs have a certain quirkiness as well as a guitar and bass sound that is reminiscent of the aforementioned band's early work but THE VOPOS are a little heavier on the hardcore and a bit softer on the funkiness. The yelled vocals work well with the slightly sloppy but catchy and aggressive songs that have that early SST or Mystic sound. This is exactly what a punk demo should be: short, decently recorded (doesn't have to be great but at least listenable) and no crummy filler tracks. (Pete) (6-song CD, no lyrics included, 19911 Ingrum Way, Torrance, CA 90503)

YOUNG FAVORITES – This demo's high point is the intro, which starts out with feedback building up over a sample in French that's accompanied by moody piano, stops for a second, then goes into the opening riff with the singer screaming over. Everything after isn't quite up to the high bar set by the intro, but this is still a solid demo of harsh, sonically powerful (I bet this band is *loud* live) hardcore that's metal-tinged without being grind or metalcore, with lots of stop-start parts and interesting drumming and guitar work. (Dan) (4-song CD, lyrics included, myspace.com/youngfavorites)

ZERO CHILD – The label that released this demo is called Basement Blues and I think that's a fit description of this band. Sounds very much like a neu-'60s garage rock band but with a scummy, New York proto-punk feel, a la NEW YORK DOLLS, THE HEARTBREAKERS, etc. At times they remind me of VEE DEE, and at other moments more like SPACEMEN THREE oddly enough. The production is really slick and sounds great and considering the amount of work that must have been contributed towards this (i.e., recording, artwork, etc.)—demo may not be the most appropriate descriptor. (Vinnie) (12-song CD, no lyrics included. www.basementblues.net)

V/A – "Fuck California Dreaming!" – It's not really a demo but it's a CD-R compilation of lo-fi garage rock bands, some a little more surf-inspired than others. It's a bit of a bummer that there is no info on any of the bands or even a track listing (I think I figured it out, though), but I do know that it was put out by an Italian label and at least a couple of the bands are from California. The better bands on here include SUPERSONICEEL, THE TRADITIONAL FOOLS, CHARLIE & THE MOONHEARTS and THE BABES. On the whole, it's not the greatest stuff ever made but garage bands just seem to have more fun. (Pete) (22-song CD, no lyrics included, wolfmanbob@libero.it)

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Reviews by:
(JD)Judy Balmin
(JB) Julia Booze
(JU) Justin Briggs
(KC) Karoline Collins
(BG) Bob Goldie
(CH) Cassie Harwood
(MJ) Meredith Jones
(NM) Nick Mangel
(JM) Jeff Mason
(SM) Scott Miller
(CR) Casey Ress
(CI) Cissie Scurlock
(DS) Dionne Stevens

ABSOLUTELY ZIPPO #42 / $3
8.5 x 5.5 – copied – 92 pgs
The long-running *Absolutely Zippo* is back with another huge issue. This time around it includes interviews with Connie Fuckin' Francis, Yes Please, Pinhead Gunpowder, and a bunch of music and zine reviews, personal-style writings, and more. It definitely has that classic cut-and-paste look, a blend of handwritten and typed layout. Very cool. (NM)
PO Box 4985 / Berkeley, CA 94704

ANARCHOI #24 / $1.50
8.5 x 11.75 – copied – 28 pgs
If you couldn't tell by the title, *Anarchoi* is a punk zine that leans towards anarchism, or at least coverage of bands that embrace anarchism, since the issue is comprised almost exclusively of interviews and brief music and zine reviews. The editor behind this rag remains open minded about his politics, however, and even gives a band like Condemned 84 an interview (although a basic, through-the-mail one). Some of the interviews were better than others, and appeared to be due to whether they were done in person or not. Good questions and answers with Social Parasites and Active Slaughter. The others, Condemned 84, Bastard Squad and Prairie Dugs, seem to have been done through the post. The overall aesthetic is a simple, cut-and-paste approach, with lots of empty space (many pages are just words and white paper) and containing more than one bad digital-damaged photo. A tour report from the band Atomgevitter rounds out the issue. This whole effort is pretty decent, but it's a quick read with little substantial material. I think this would be much better if there were some stronger layouts, and perhaps more of a scope beyond reviews and interviews. (BG)
James Gemmel / 3 Hazel Grove / Kilwinning / Ayshire / KA13 7JH / SCOTLAND

ARISE! ATLAS 2008 / $6 + $2 shipping
5.5 x 4.25 – printed – 142 pgs
A handy pocket sized guide to the Twin Cities (Minneapolis and St. Paul, Minnesota) produced by the Arise! collective. Arise! is a radical, collectively/volunteer run bookstore and resource center based in Minneapolis since 1993. The presentation is visually reminiscent of the *Slingshot Organizer*, but the contents are quite different. Inside you will find hand drawn maps of the neighborhoods in the Twin Cities, bike routes, radical history maps, suggested day trips, space to write down your own plans and discoveries and last (but not least) maps detailing the official venues of the Republican National Convention (being held in Mpls/St. Paul Sept. first – fourth, this will be very handy for protesting!!!). There is also a helpful map key that designates progressive and radical locales along the way. The coupons and advertisements for like-minded businesses in the back of the guide are a nice bonus. A must have for anyone in the Midwest that frequents the Twin Cities, or anyone planning to visit (or protest!) in 2008. Excellent resource! Can't wait to see what the 2009 edition will hold... (KC)
Arise! Bookstore / 2441 Lyndale Avenue S / Minneapolis, MN 55405
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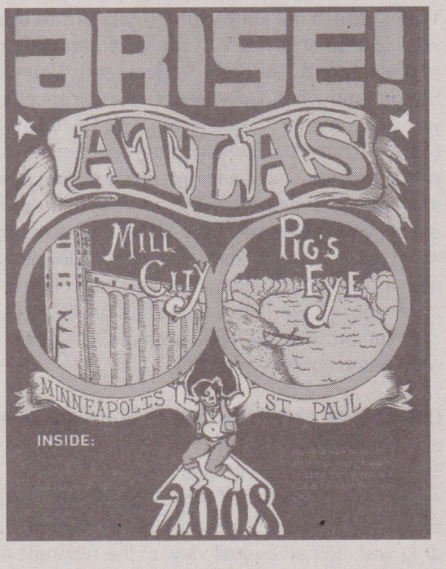


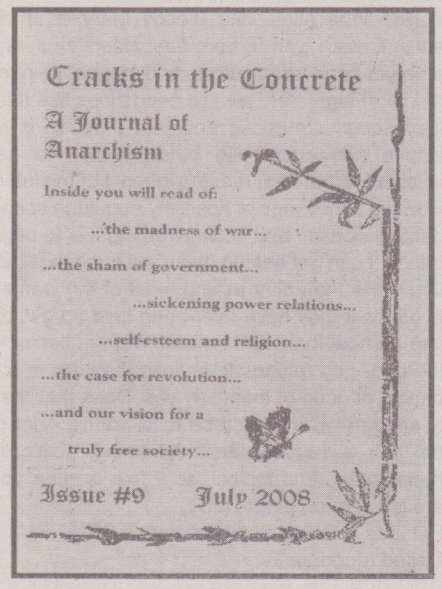
A ZINE 4 THE LADIES #1 / $2 plus $2 for postage
4.25 x 5.5 – copied – 40 pgs
So this is what the ladies are doing over there in the Motherland. The selection of interviewees is as follows: Siue, a vegan cookbook author, Naomi Hates Humans, a singer songwriter who runs a label, Kim, a promoter, Jelena, a straight-edge singer and vegan cook who does a non-profit food stall at shows called "Bake Down the Walls," Inga Allen, aka Bloody Mary, a tattoo artist, Chris 12 oh 5, from *Last Hours* zine, Isy, a vegan cook book author, and Hannah, singer of Little Flags. Yes, we still need zines like this, they serve a purpose and that purpose is to inspire and encourage other women to get involved. What I am reading in most of the interviews is a message of positivity about the scene despite sexism, and how rewarding it is to be in bands. I can get behind that. One thing that baffles me is the editor asking most of the women in bands if they have ever been held up getting into a show their own band is playing because the door guy refuses to believe they are in the band, yet none of them say yes. Does that really happen? That would be fuss-worthy. A lot of the talk is vaguely feminist-leaning, politically rudimentary, and topical, so if that is what you are looking for, bingo. (JB)
PO Box 1398 / Southampton / S016 9WX / United Kingdom

BAD APPLES #1 / free
4.5 x 5.5 – copied – 8 pgs
This is a nice little one-page zine from England—short and sweet. A couple record reviews (Career Suicide, Uptight Tonight, Go it Alone, The Ergs) and blurbs of interest such as a tofu scramble recipe and movie suggestions. The highlight of this little zine is an interview with punk artist Steve Larder, who drew illustrations for Microcosm. (MJ)
philchockword@aol.com

BAD APPLES #2 / free
4.5 x 5.5 – copied – 8 pgs
Again, this little one sheet zine delivers. First couple pages are suggestions on some cool punk podcasts/online radio shows, and well compiled descriptions of what is on them and where to find them. As per the first issue, the centerfold is an interview, this time with Chris Clavin of Plan-it-X Records. This zine is really to the point and keeps a short attention span well. Perfect for those listeners of songs under three minutes. And the price is right! (MJ)
philchockwork@aol.com

ZINES

BALD CACTUS #26 / 50p
5.75 x 8.25 – copied – 32 pgs
Here we have the 20th anniversary issue of this UK punk zine. This issue (as they all very well may) is full to the gills on topics relevant to today's anarcho punk scene. Featured are interviews with Inner Terrestrials, Pete Wright of Crass, a brief but interesting one with Subhumans/Citizen Fish/Culture Shock's Dick Lucas, Fuck With Fire, and Social Parasites. Also spread throughout this issue are rants that are generally of the political nature but lack the dryness of the standard "political rant" and are written in an unusual and humorous voice. If this sounds like your bag, it probably is. Worth checkin' out. (JU)
Andy Cactus c/o 145-149 Cardigan Road / Leeds, LS6 1LJ / United Kingdom
baldcactus@gmail.com
www.baldcactusdistro.co.uk



BROKEN PENCIL #40 / $5.95
8.5 x 11.75 – printed – 64 pgs
I really appreciate the DIY approach that this zine takes. Being primarily focused on "zine culture and the independent arts," *Broken Pencil* is filled with essays and writings covering everything from how-to guides to setting up/infiltrating festivals to comic and art books excerpts to fictional pieces. I enjoy that the depth to this publication goes beyond the standard "4/4", if you will, of the general format of zines that I usually review. This "summer how-to issue" definitely falls into the category of multiple sittings and rereading. I look forward to reading future issues. (SM)
PO Box 203 / Station P / Toronto, ON / M5S 2S7 / Canada

BUTTHOLE MAGAZINE #1 / $?
5.5 x 8.5 – copied – 28 pgs
I'll go the lazy route and let the first page of this zine write its own review: "...the very best drawings of buttholes that the western world has to offer." This is jaw-dropping. (JU)
kateferencz@gmail.com

CINDERBLOCK #1 / donation
8.5 x 11 – copied – 20 pgs
This zine chronicles the anonymous author's experience during a year of mental illness and her suicide attempt and recovery. Her story is told as if she wrote it all in a hurry, which gives the feeling you get when you are panicking. Her experience in a downward spiral of depression and schizophrenic hallucinations are very real, and for the entire account I wondered what her purpose in writing this could be, because her situation was so desperately horrible. Finally, her suicide attempt ironically turned her life around, and made her reach deep down into herself and decide that her mental illness should not be a reason to not appreciate what she has in life. This zine is an honest, real, and hopeful look into mental illness. (MJ)
1732 Wedgewood / Apt. #5 / Green Bay / WI 54303

CLOG #1/ $5
5.5 x 4.25 – printed – 32 pages
I picked this up at a Needles and Pens reading, which featured Sam McPheeters reading from this and Tara Tavi showing a movie she made about a ten-month odyssey across China on a music related grant, recording traditional and non-traditional music. If you have a chance to catch this tour you should, because it made for an interesting combination of entertainments... At any rate, *Clog* was termed a book when McPheeters gave it to me, but we are reviewing it in the zines section regardless. There's a match-book sized mini section fittingly titled "*Puny,*" attached to its center pages filled with excellent artworks; a hairy hand reaching for a champagne glass, angry men and frustrated teeth etc. The main feature is quarter sized and features short stories with titles such as "Punishment Bathroom," "Big Baby Man," "Street Team," and "First Date Tips." If you are familiar with McPheeters' prior work with bands Born Against, Men's Recovery Project, and Wrangler Brutes, and zines *Dear Jesus* and *I, Yeast Roll* you will have a vague inclination of what to expect. There's a certain sharp-edged surreal satire present, with savage attacks on secret shoppers, self-help "you too can get rich quick" speak, being trapped with "That Guy with the shitty tattoos" and so forth. I feel my review is not getting across how funny this item is, in fact it is quite clear I have failed. Just send off for it! (LG)
112 Harvard Ave. #316 / Claremont, CA 91711
www.sammcpheeters.com

CRACKS IN THE CONCRETE #9 / free, trade, donation
5.5 x 8.5 – printed – 40 pgs
Accessible anarchist rhetoric, priced to move! Examined herein are religion, heterosexism, the drug war, and an overall view of the rationale for a society based on mutual aid. This is kind of entry level stuff, so if that's you this would be a fine place to dip your toe in the water, so's to speak. I would think that a dollar and some stamps would minimize the editor's financial losses. (JM)
Luke Romard / PO Box 2748 / Tucson, AZ 85702

DISTURBIOS SOCIAIS #10 / $2 ppd or trade
4.25 x 5.5 – copied – 24 pgs –Portuguese
Sorry punks, this zine is in Portuguese, and I am one of those losers who doesn't even know Spanish. From what I can deduce from *cognatos falsos*, the tone, if I am getting it right, is a mix of popular culture reporting, juvenile indignance and Christian Evangelism? Or maybe it is mostly about the problem of Evangelism? How am I supposed to know? Those free translator websites are giving me all kinds of weird answers and my only Portuguese speaking *homie* told me what he could over the phone. The pages are dense and full of writing and nicely copied photos, there seems to be a ton of different writing in here including news articles, record, book, film and zine reviews, and ads for music releases. One of the interviews is definitely with a Missionary, and the intro begins with something to the effect of "they still believe in Jesus." I really wish I could read the part that seems to be entirely about teaching the Bible to children, since there is a little graphic that looks like a postage stamp apparently celebrating 2008 as the year of the Bible. I'd hate to be wrong about something like this, and it would be easy to be wrong, since there are also pictures of record covers with things like the pope with a target superimposed over his forehead. (JB)
Silas A. Fiorotti / CP. #1771 – SP / SP-01032 970 / Brazil
disturbiossociais@gmail.com
http://disturbiossociais.blogspot.com

DOLL #252 /$?
10 x 7 – printed – 116 pgs –Japanese
This zine never really changes for me. The band pictures are still awesome, the mail order ads are just as tempting, and the interviews are still in a language I can only hope to ever understand. This Japanese print fanzine covers a variety of bands in this issue, including but not limited to: Supersnazz, Hariss, Arts, Bristles, Systematic Death, and Nu Punk. (MJ)
NO. 303 AOTA Bldg. / 3-1-9, Kita / Kohenji / Suginami-Ku / Tokyo / Japan
hensyu@doll-mag.co.jp

DOLL #253 / $?
7 x 9 – printed – 132 pgs – Japanese
As always, the photographs here are fucking rad. If you can read Japanese, you'll be busy for a month. This installment features a story about London's Roxy club, excepted from a longer piece, originally in English (I strongly suspect) by Paul Marko. There's a long interview, I believe conducted recently, with Poly Styrene. Another section features the Boston bands Dropkick Murphys (shitty and washed up for ten years now), Everybody Out, and Mark Lind. More content: EU's Arse, Stupids, Coffins, Wendy O. Williams, a Blowback/Tragedy US tour report. I'm leaving things out—the music content is pretty diverse. You can see a swastika on the cover, so watch out if you bring a copy to Germany. (JM)
No. 303 Aota Bldg. / 3-1-9 / Kita / Kohenji / Suginami-Ku / Toyko / Japan
hensyu@doll-mag.co.jp

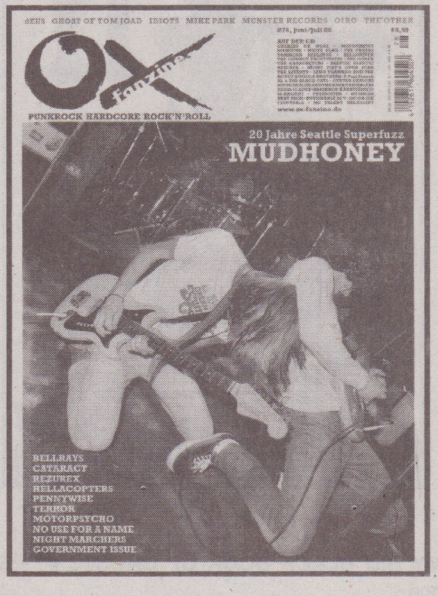
EQUALIZING DISTORT Vol 8, Issue 4 / $?
8.5 x 11 – copied – 20pgs
Stephe Perry's been doing this zine for years now, and with *Equalizing Distort* he has more than adequately, and somewhat *nerdily* (that's a term of endearment by the way), documented the greater Ontario punk scene and the international DIY punk/HC world, with brief glimpses of Japanese punk obsession as well. Every issue contains at least one interview focusing on a band that has played and interviewed on his radio show on CIUT in Toronto. This issue features freshly formed Toronto hardcore band Living Darkness, San Diego's unique and weird Crime Desire, London, Ontario's "first" punk band the Sinners, and record store mogul Pete Genest (previous owner of Singles Going Steady in Seattle and currrent head of Hits and Misses in Toronto). All of the interviews are good this time around—reading the band interviews makes me interested to hear their music, which is a supreme indicator of a good interview of a band that you've never heard. This issue of *Equalizing Distort* is rounded out by record, demo, zine, and book reviews, a show list, and a *rumourmill*. In general, this is nice and quick read and is much appreciated in these dark days of print media. (CI)
21 Foundry Ave, Unit 5, Toronto, ON, M6H 4K7 Canada
equalizingxdistort@ciut.fm

FAG SCHOOL #3 / $3.50
8.5 x 11 – copied – 32 pgs
Oh my. The first half has some short interviews and an advice column. Not all the questions are great, but everything's good enough. A lot of discussion concerns having magnificent style, in the wild and trashed-out sense. The second half is closer to genius, with extensive sections devoted to cruising, blacking out, nightmare parties, and romantic follies. No detail is spared. The writing is clever, sharp, and hilarious. The editor is full of enthusiasm for sex, drugs, and a good time general. A number of naked dudes with big dicks are photographed. I halfway think the price is too high, I mean $3.50 for not the hugest publication. But on the other hand, payin' tuition to some fancy college would not get you the education available here. I hope it doesn't take two years for #4 to come out. (JM)
Brontez1@gmail.com

THE INNER SWINE Vol. 14, #2 / $2
8.5 x 5.5 – printed – 60 pgs
I'm going out on a limb here and assuming that most people who read the zine reviews here in *MRR* are generally interested in zines in the first place and probably read this section on a regular basis. That said I don't want to repeat the same review that we always give for this fantastic rag, *The Inner Swine*, in the sense of telling you that this is a writer's zine, written for people who like writing. Make sense? In other words, if you enjoy absolutely engaging and humorous prose that will have you frequently laughing out loud as you read along, then this is your cup of tea. There are no punk band interviews or anything like that, just hilarious reflections on different aspects of life. In this issue, the editor, Jeff Somers, gives us his hysterical insights into being distracted by high-speed internet, social (dis)functions in the office environment, people singing aloud with their iPods, and fear mongering in the media. Also included are some short works of fiction, which are well written of course, but don't interest me as much as the rants. This zine is hands down recommended for those who enjoy reading zines of substance. For two bucks, you'll definitely get your money's worth. (BG)
Inner Swine / PO Box 3024 / Hoboken, NJ 07030 / www.innerswine.com

LONGHAUL INFOSHOP 15TH ANNIVERSARY / $1.50
8.5 x 5.5 – copied – 20 pgs
Documenting the colorful history of the Longhaul Infoshop in Berkeley deserves more than the 20 pages presented in this zine. Before I moved to The City in the mid-nineties, The Longhaul—along with Epicenter and Gilman—occupied a special place in my mind where punks and anarchists sat planning and plotting their next moves against the state while composting, silkscreening, and making zines. The gap between reality and romance might be larger than I'd like, but as the name suggests, they've dedicate themselves to staying around and maintaining an alternative space for years to come. This zine contains only a fraction of what I'm sure has occurred in the space on Shattuck, but it's a good start. (CR)
3124 Shattuck Ave. / Berkeley, CA 94705

LOSERDOM #18 / $2 or 2 Euros
8.5 x 5.75 – copied – 36 pgs
Haling from Ireland, *Loserdom* is quite a quality package. Printed on recycled paper, bound with purple and blue cord and full of interesting stories (with some obligatory reviews thrown in for good measure). Excellent layout and unique hand drawn caricatures abound. This particular issue covers the London Zine Symposium, Lady Fest Cork, the *Token Feminist Hero* comic, ending the occupation of Iraq (5 years on), cathartic bicycle rides, and a "Postcard from Rome" that discusses the humdrum routine of daily existence and overcoming loneliness against the background of the movie *The Last Man on Earth*. Good stuff! I look forward to seeing the next issue. (KC)
www.loserdomzine.com
loserdomzine@gmail.com



MODERN HATE VIBE #1 &#2 / $6 ppd
8.5 x 5.5 – copied – 50+ pages
This is an insider hardcore fanzine coming out of the UK. It's the typical cut-and-paste style, but it's surprisingly attractive. The *art* part of collage obviously took a high priority. This writer is seriously cynical about the hardcore scene and talks a buncha jive about people on message boards, people who don't go to shows, people who she thinks don't actually listen to hardcore anymore for some pretentious reasons, *and* people who think it's pretentious to deviate from standard hardcore themes and lyrical content. She's a big time hater, but pretty funny about it. There's a bunch of rants ripping on every whimsy. She even asks at one point, "Why is *MRR* so full of

people decrying things as un-punk?" This question is clearly directed at us, so my first thought is, "Why do people write zines specifically to be reviewed by *MRR*?" But, really, my personal opinion is: Who cares what a handful of dudes think is punk or isn't? Do your own thing and don't waste your flavor struggling with neigh-sayers and arbitrary classifications. If you have big ideas, you ought to ride them all the way to New-Stuff-Land and never look back. Seems kind of obvious, but perhaps needs to be revisited if you're paying so much attention to all the other haters. *Modern Hate Vibe* also has bands interviews and record reviews. And she plugs her own band, The Sceptres, but she says that's the standard fanzine thing to do, so it's ok. This author is full of flippant remarks and wild contradictions, but it's not bad, because her head is in an awesome place. And she definitely taught me one valuable lesson in this zine, which is that I don't ever want to be a "tosser." (JD)
31A Saltoun Road / Brighton, London SW2 1EN / United Kingdom
bryonyismyname@hotmail.com

MY BIG BLACK BOOK OF GHOSTS #? / $3 ppd
5.5 x 8.5 – copied – 72 pgs
This zine reads as a series of vignettes about moments, travels, and memories of the author's past. The underlying theme is of "ghosts and the things that haunt us"—which, based on the stories, doesn't necessarily mean ghosts in the traditional sense, but things in our lives that we no longer connect with, or people we no longer see. The tone of the writing certainly matches the theme—it is eerily vivid, but with a sort of detached attitude about the subject matter. This is the kind of writing that makes you feel really uncomfortable after reading it, like you aren't necessarily sure what to make of what you just read. Sort of a weird zine, but that fits it somehow. (MJ)
vinylrites@gmail.com

NEW TO EVERYTHING #7 / $1 or trade
4 x 4.5 – copied – 24 pages
This is a petite, typewritten, pretty much all text, personal zine about living in a house in a town and doing stuff. And accidentally punkifying (gentrifying?) a family neighborhood in the process. There are some anecdotes about setting up an art show and trying against a bunch of different odds to make it happen in a snowy place where it's hard to get people to do things in the snow. I won't tell you what happens. There's also a love story that involves crawling around in a fast food dumpster looking for soda cups to be used as currency. This zine can be summed up as one punk's gentle tales of traveling and other small adventures. (JD)
P.O. Box 10713 / Pittsburgh, PA 15203
Leanne@scissorpress.com

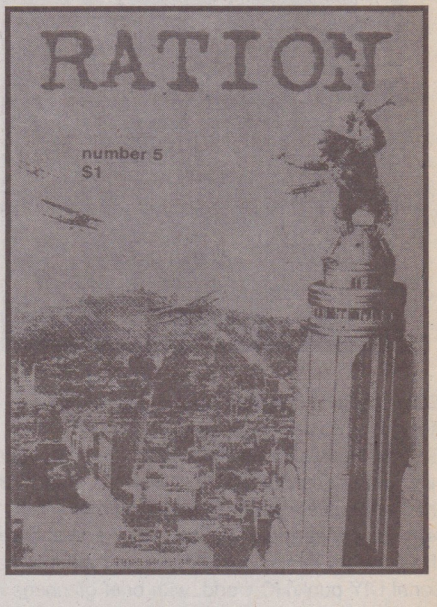
NIGHT OF THE LOCUST #2 + 3 / ?1, $1, 50p, or trade
5.75 x 7.75 – copied – 52 pgs, 32 pgs
These are Irish music zines that cover punk bands. Their concerns are more about going to gigs than hating society. Both of these issues are packed with content, so if you want to become dialed in to the Irish scene, these would be a decent choice. The many interviews aren't super compelling, but serve their purpose just fine. So while these are not the most exciting zines I've come across, the music coverage is strong. One writer, Furious D, does veer into politics, and he's a good writer who gets his point across well. Another guy tells you how to copyright your song, so it's not stolen for commercial radio. One heartening part is the many bands saying that kids today are "spoilt" 'cuz of all the bands touring Ireland these days. I read (not in here) that a pint of Guinness in Dublin costs $7.20! (JM)
Kollin Finnerty / Liam Meadows Road / Loughrea / Co. Galway / Ireland
neverinamillion@gmail.com

OX FANZINE #78 / ?4.50
8.25 x 11.75 – printed – 138 pgs – German
This is the second time I have been given a copy of *Ox* for review and I feel the same way about this issue as I did the last, I'm not convinced this is a punk magazine. Everything is in German so I can't really tell what is being said, but nonetheless the ads for shoes and big label records, makes me question. Tons of interviews and reviews set up much like *Skyscraper*. I'm sure there wasn't much missed in my lack of understanding the German language in the Pennywise interview. (SM)
Postfach 11 04 20 / 42664 Solingen / Germany

PLASTIC BOMB #63 / ?3.50
8.5 x 11.75 – printed – 76 pgs – German
Here we have another issue of Germany's long-standing glossy punk rag. Along with an extensive 48-page catalog of all your punk needs and a sampler CD, this issue features interviews with SS-Kaliert, Reagan Youth, Gary Bushell, Upright Citizens, among others. All the text is in German so I have no idea what it says. (JU)
Postfach 100205 / D-47002 Duisburg / Germany
www.plastic-bomb.de

PUBLICK OCCURANCES #11 / $?
4 x 5.5 – copied – 20 pgs
A small pamphlet sized zine that has a cool screen-printed cover. This seems to be a bunch of portraits (well done ones) of a bunch of different people. No text, not long on explanations but pretty cool. (NM)
Danny Martin / 746 E. 5th St / #23 / Tucson, AZ 85719

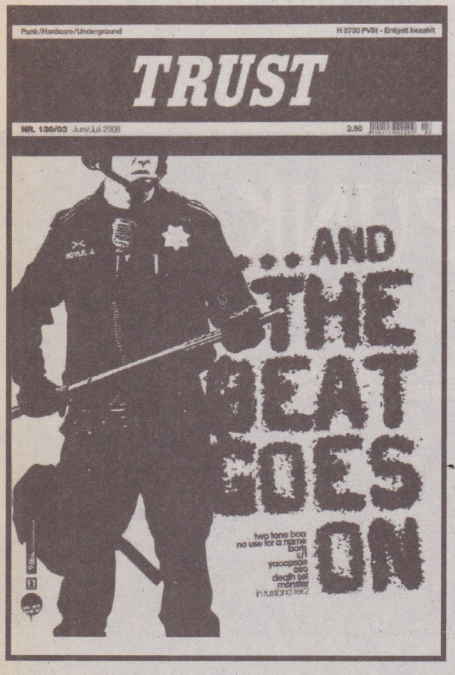
PUNK ZINE: THE ART/HISTORY ISSUE #? / free
11 x 17 – copied – 44 pgs
This large-format zine is composed primarily of interviews and this issue focuses on punk artists. While some of the interviews are a little bit weak, there is a lot of content overall and the effort put into the zine as a whole is really cool. It was also nice to see visual punk artists represented over bands for once. The other defining element of *Punk Zine* is that it is based out of Columbus, Ohio, and many of the interviews and ads are of bands native to the area. Artists and interviews of interest include: Geoff Hing of Defiance, Ohio, Jason from the Neil House, Jimmy Buttons of Legion of Doom, and punk artists Phonzie Davis and Johnny Rattail. (MJ)
James Payne / 115 W. 10th Ave. / Columbus, OH 43201



RATION #5 / $2 ppd
8.5 x 5.75 – copied – 20 pgs
I read my copy of *Ration* while on the 24-Divisadero, en route to the *MRR* house. The bus ride was a little chaotic and bumpy, but I barely noticed as I fell headlong into this long awaited issue. Arwen is an incredible writer and her words seep through my pores and warm my bones like the sun after a long week of San Francisco chilly mist and fog. Tales of collecting stories/sound bites for a summer internship at a public radio station in NYC, losing the sense of your own size, concentration, lovers and love lost, the potentially awkward meeting of pen pals, alfalfa sprouts in bed, the power of objects on our memory, story writing, libraries, and Jorge

Luis Borges. The way all these topics are woven together in such a small amount of space is truly incredible. Like those favorite books we all come across once in awhile, I just never want *Ration* to end. Luckily, as the *Ration* "gimmick" goes, the next issue will be one 8.5" x 11" page longer, which equals 4 more pages of wonderful writing. Fantastic layout and an eye catching silkscreened cover are just a bonus. Amazing. (KC)
Arwen Curry / PO Box 170291 / SF, CA 94117
arwencurry@gmail.com
Also available through Microcosm

RAZORCAKE #45 /$4
8.5 x 11 – printed- 116 pgs
An illustration of Leatherface's Frankie Stubbs on the cover is more than enough reason to recommend a zine in my opinion. This issue of the Los Angeles zine mainstay includes, besides the aforementioned Frankie Stubbs being interviewed, a memorial on RKL, a look at infoshops, reviews, and columns. As always it's a solid publication with humor and enough comics to please anyone. (CR)
PO Box 42129 / Los Angeles, CA 90042
www.razorcake.org



SHADOWPLAY #25 / **YOU CAN'T SAY NO TO HOPE** #10 / 50p
8.5 x 5.5 – copied – 16 pgs
Fairly short split zine, both from the UK. *You Can't Say No To Hope* is more of a quirky punk rock zine, with some funny stuff about thrasher fashion, stoats (that's an animal, apparently!), and an interview with *Spiderplant* zine. *Shadowplay* is a little harder to pin down and has everything from stuff about '90s TV and movie comedies to a piece about visiting Auschwitz. Pretty cool, if brief. (NM)
www.shadowplay.org.uk

SMEAR #11 / ?
8.5 x 5.5 – copied – 20 pgs
I have no idea what to make of this zine. It's a collection of photocopied illustrations with accompanying humorous text. The highlights include excerpts from teenage diaries, a top ten of why they hated Heath Ledger, including "Patriot Act hair," and the lost lyrics of Garth Brooks. Funny shit. (CR)
smear.campaign@hotmail.com

TERMS OF PSYCHIC WARFARE #1 / $2, email first for a trade
8.5 x 11 – copied – 38 pgs
What I have before me is brilliance as simple as ketchup on my tater tots. I read it on the train and felt smarter afterwards. I don't know you, friend, but we would have plenty to talk about. Anyone who draws comics featuring characters that look like little monsters, have arguments about rock star man-babies and if they are listening to too much Hüsker Dü and then get visited by the ghost of Johnny Cash, Yo La Tengo, Wolverine, and 18-year-old Jesse Michaels, is automatically invited to sleep on my couch and eat my food. March on, you genius. (JB)
Anthony Sorge / 23 Taylor Ave. / Bethel, CT 06801
psychicwarfare@hotmail.com

TOO MANY HUMANS / $2
5.5 x 8.5 – copied – 16pgs
Too Many Humans...well it's always fun to engage in other's misanthropy (although the title could be a reference to the No Trend album of the same name). This zine gives off a very creep 'n' cult vibe—it's modern in that way. Most of the zine is centered around home made drawings and collages, and then appropriate clippings and tales are placed alongside the art. I have to admit that I was incredibly impressed by the artist's rather accurate rendering of the *Feel the Darkness* cover, which was replicated alongside a story of Tiny Tim suing Poison Idea for using his photo on the record cover. Other pages touch on DB Cooper (if you don't know this dude, then research him for a cool story), some drunken skeletons, a kid beating his deadbeat dad to death, and some other bizarre-ass shit. The drawings are cool but the collages really bring it all together. One of the better DIY art zines that I've seen lately. (CI)
1625 Peninsula Dr, Arcata, CA 95521
bleedingallcrazy@gmail.com

THE TROUBLE WITH NORMAL #88 / $3
8.5 x 5.5 – copied – 48 pgs
This is the first time I have ever seen an issue of *The Trouble With Normal*, so I can't compare it to the past issues, but this time around Boon and company cover some show reviews, interviews (with Twin and Pansy Division), music reviews and an article on the 2008 Supreme Court decision concerning the rights of detainees. It's a decent read, the pictures are clear enough to look at and the format is pretty straightforward. (SM)
PO Box 1444 / Columbia, MO 65205-1444

TRUST #130 / ?2.50
8.5 x 11 – printed – 68pgs – German
I always feel like I'm cheating when I review foreign language zines. Obviously, I can't read a word of what is written in *Trust* aside from the band names. I know that it is the longest-running German punk zine, and although the magazine's coverage has gotten a bit more mainstream over the years, it still offers some DIY punk and culture throughout. The bands featured this time are Oiro, Two Ton Boa, Death Set, No Use For a Name, Boris, S/T, Mönster, and Yacøpsae. Beyond that you will find no shortage of music and zine reviews, punk news, German tour listings (from bands the world over), and photos of sweaty dudes in bands and their energetic fans. For those that read German, there is something for everyone(CI)
Postfach 11 07 62, 28087 Bremen, Germany
dolf@trust-zine.de
www.trust-zine.de

URINAL GUM #5 / $2
4.5 x 5.5 – copied – 44 pgs
These dudes are trying to be funny, and they seem to thrive along the border of poor taste. They're not particularly offensive, nor particularly funny, but they get kind of close to both. But it's like offensive-on-purpose, and they just didn't have the skills to succeed. There are fake stories, fake letters to real businesses, reviews (the Miranda July book review is the highlight), stories about their friend who would get all the girls, etc. I would not pay two dollars for this issue. (JM)
PO Box 1243 / Eugene, OR 97440 / www.urinalgum.com

WHATS THE JAM #2 / $2
5.5 x 5.5 – copied – 24 pgs
Wow, this is one of the most creative zines I've come across in a while, at least as far as its assembly. The cover is an original cut-and-paste job and each issue is bound using tacks instead of staples. The girl behind this endeavor, Tuna, emanates a sense of DIY innovative spirit by putting together this simple, yet enjoyable project full of cartoons, reviews, thoughts, and even a recipe for making vegan pizza. Even the envelope used to send the zine to *MRR* was covered with funny cut outs of Judas Priest. Her live music reviews range from a Duran Duran show (in which she claims they played "Warm Leatherette" by the Normal!) to a Converge set. While I enjoyed reading through this, I do have to mention that the large handwriting takes up a lot of space and the whole thing can be read in about four minutes. That said, I really enjoyed the broad range of topics and music covered, and I look forward to seeing future issues. Speaking of which, I checked out her MySpace page and apparently this issue is already sold out, but the new one should be out by the time you read this. Get in touch. (BG)
Tuna / 1626 N. Wilcox Ave. #919 / Hollywood, CA 90028
whatsthejam@yahoo.com
www.myspace.com/whatsthejam

924 GILMAN

AUGUST

Sunday 24 DOORS @ 4:00PM
Bring It Home • Radio Suicide
Heavy Lies the Crown • Hit the Switch
The Story So Far • Fight Fair

Friday 29 • DOORS @ 7:30
Sahn Maru • Germ Attack (Canada)
Appalachian Terror Unit (West Virginia)
Wartorn (WI) • Acts Of Sedition • Yellow Eyes

Saturday 30 • DOORS @ 7:30
The Force (Reunion, members of AFI)
Said Radio (ex-Nerve Agents)
Static Thought (record release show)
Das Kapital • Wolves & Thieves

Sunday 31
Fucked Up • Trash Talk • The Strange Boys
Crystal Antlers • Murder Practice

SEPTEMBER

Friday 4 • Doors Opea @ 7:00PM
John the Baker • Fast Heart Mart
Emily Stein • Joe Red

Friday 5
Born/Dead • Dead Section (PDX)
Fix My Head • DCoi • You Die

Saturday 6
La Plebe • Disaster Strikes (MA) • Armistice
Echo of Bullets • Tierra y Libertad

Thursday 11
Bill Collins (ex-Special Forces, MDC, Fang)
Kevin Seconds (7 Seconds)

Friday 12 • $8-$10 • ACS Benefit
Ceremony • Crucified
Foreign Nature • Poverty Bay Saints
Skin Like Iron • Over The Edge

Saturday 13
Hunx And His Punk • Floating Corpses
Bridez • Younger Lovers • The No Gos

Friday 19
Sabertooth Zombie • Zann (Germany)
Graf Orlock (LA) • Comadre

Saturday 20
Phobia (OC) • In Disgust • Godstomper
Semetex Vest (OC) • Thousandswilldie
War Trash

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CLASSIFIEDS

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TRAFFIC & WEATHER (ex-gibbons dirty but melodic, intense, Detroit punk) RED AND BLUE (pop-punk ala east bay from queens, NY) split LP out now on Mandible/Los Diaper records. $10 ppd in US. MandibleRecords.com

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NUCLEARFUCKINSKULL-N-BONES: music, blogs, merch, videos, weed, crazy GRLs, fast cars, blazin' guitars, chaos, lawsuits, booze, magic ponies. Don't believe me? myspace.com/nuclearskull

PUNK DVDS: UK/EURO/US system. Trade/sale. Thousands of shows/promos/tv clips. 1960's – NOW! Punk rock in all its myriad guises! SAE (UK), 2IRCs (overseas) or decent trades list: Dave, 50a Great King St, Edinburgh, Scotland. E-mail: gingoblin @easynet.co.uk.

FORK IT OVER! MRR can now accept your parents tax-deductable donations! Whoo Hoo!!! See page six to find out how.

WARBIRD ENTERTAINMENT SIGNS LET ME OUT: We're very excited to announce that we have signed Let Me Out to the Warbird family! Let me Out is a hardcore-punk band with old-school influences. Look for their brand new CD/LP to drop early next year. As of now Let Me Out is almost finished writing their new songs, and we're very excited with how there turning out. Please check out the bands links below for all their latest news, tour dates and to hear some of their tracks!! www.letmeouthc.net, www.myspace .com/letmeouthc

CALL FOR ENTRIES!!!. Gettysburg Free Media Collective presents: The 1st Annual Gettysburg Documentary Film & Video Festival. No entry fee! 2009 screening time & place to be announced. To be considered, please send a preview copy* of your documentary short film/video to: Gettysburg Free Media Collective, PO Box 3724, Gettysburg, PA 17325; www.creativecrowd.com/gfmc; gfmc@creativecrowd.com.

POISONED CANDY RECORDS: A syndication of different projects. Anarchist record label/distro; home of Portland distortion ninjas: SQUALORA; propaganda machine (political pamphlets and we make affordable anarcho-syndicalist flags for demonstrations); screen printing and other assorted coolness. Keep DIY alive! www.poisonedcandy.com

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SALUTES TO ALL HARDCORE PUNX. 32 year old, die hard punk, currently incarcerated and still have a few years left looking for correspondence with any female punx of like-minded and interests. Brett McKeehan #69470, ESP PO Box 1989, Ely, Nevada, 89301.

WANTED – rare demo/studio or live recordings on audio tape or CDR of 76-84 punk/indie/anarcho etc. Some later stuff also needed, only cheap prices please. Send lists to M.A. Dabill, 2 Upper Lombard Street, Rawdon, Leeds LS19 6BP England.

I PLEDGE ALLEGIANCE to no man, to no god!!! Time to stand up! Believe in ourselves! We don't need anyone's help!

HEY! MRR is looking for copies of *Rodrigo D. No Future*, *Burst City*, *Out of the Blue*, *Ladies and Gentlemen the Fabulous Stains*, Preferably fairly decent DVD copies... Also, there are these recent documentaries on East-German punk and one on the Jarocin festivals in Poland. Email layla@maximumrocknroll .com

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